A NEWSFIELD PUBLICATION
No. 47 MARCH 1989
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ZZAP! C64 AMIGA

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Screen shots from various systems

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ISSUE 47 MARCH, 1989

CONTENTS

GOOD GAMES

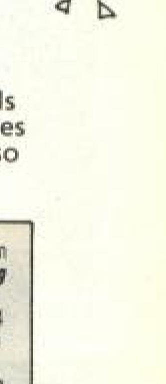




FEATURES

COMPETITIONS

REGULARS



EDITORIAL *47 Gravel Hill, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1QS* ☎ 0584 5851/2/3 **Editor:** Gordon Houghton **Assistant Editor:** Kati Hamza **Staff Writers:** Matthew Evans, Lloyd Mangram **Designer:** Mark Kendrick **Senior Designer:** Wayne Allen **Assistant Designers:** Melvyn 'The Mel' Fisher, Yvonne Priest **Editorial Assistants:** Viv Vickress, Caroline Blake **Contributing Writers:** Mel Croucher, Martin Walker **Photography:** Cameron Pound, Michael Parkinson **PRODUCTION** *1/2 King Street, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1AQ* ☎ 0584 5851/2/3 **Reprographics/Film Planning:** Matthew Uffindell, Ian Chubb, Robert Millichamp, Robert 'The Rev' Hamilton, Tim Morris, Jenny Reddard **Publisher:** Geoff Grimes **Production Manager:** Jonathan Rignall **Editorial Director:** Roger Kean **Advertisement Director:** Roger Bennett **Advertisement Manager:** Neil Dyson **Advertisement Assistants:** Andrew Smales, Sarah Chapman **Assistants:** Jackie Morris, Lee Watkins ☎ 0584 4603 **0584 5852 MAIL ORDER** Carol Kinsey **SUBSCRIPTIONS** Denise Roberts *PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire, SY8 1DB* Typeset by the **Tortoise Shell Press**, *Ludlow*. Colour origination by **Scan Studios**, *Wallace Road, London N1*. Printed in England by **Carlisle Web Offset**, *Newtown Trading Estate, Carlisle, Cumbria CA2 7NR* – a member of the BPCC Group. Distribution by **COMAG**, *Tavistock Road, West Drayton, Middlesex*.

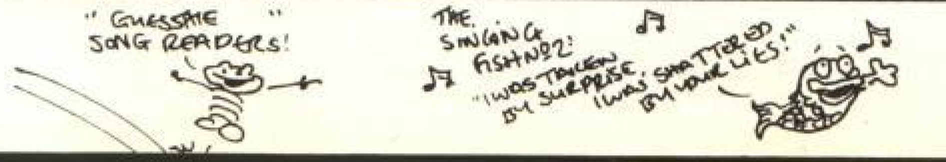
COMPETITION RULES The Editor's decision is final in all matters relating to adjudication and while we offer prizes in good faith, believing them to be available, if something untoward happens (like a game that has been offered as a prize being scrapped) we reserve the right to substitute prizes of comparable value. We'll do our very best to despatch prizes as soon as possible after the published closing date. Winners' names will appear in a later issue of ZZAP!. No correspondence can be entered into regarding the competitions (unless we've written to you stating that you have won a prize and it doesn't turn up, in which case drop Vivien Vickress or Caroline Blake a line at the PO Box 10 address). No person who has any relationship, no matter how remote, to anyone who works for either Newsfield or any of the companies offering prizes, may enter one of our competitions.

ABC

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COVER DESIGN & ILLUSTRATION BY OLIVER FREY

NEWSFIELD
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Two freedom fighters lost in eight sections of a deadly galaxy are a lone force, their own control and determination are the only things standing between them and oblivion.

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ZZAP! Big Ed

This new gadgi ZZAP! stuff an' all that

This month we've all had a wash behind the ears and got those spongy, cheesy bits out from between our toes. In other words, before you think I'm a complete 'n' utter nutter, we've had a redesign of the mag.

Just about every section has changed slightly, but a few areas have changed in a BIG way. First off, the ZZUPERSTORE now has a new look (a perm and blow-dry followed by a facial scrub); secondly, and more importantly, we've also got ourselves a new Tipster – that scruffy pseudo-Scouser ('he's really rubbish') Maff Evans now controls ME TIPS. Crap name, eh? Well, it suits him. Then there's the previews, which are a bit more snazz an' all that an' everyfin'.

Most importantly, though, there's the change to the games bits. There's a whole page devoted to the new reviews (p13) – we've got one or two new features designed to give you more information and a better reviewing system than before. But, since we haven't explained just what our ratings mean for a while now, I think it's time we did. So, here goes . . .

PRESENTATION

This covers all aspects of the program apart from the game itself: packaging, instructions, loading system, on-screen presentation, control method and options. Is it a crappy box with shoddy, brief instructions, no on-screen aids and no options, or is it a big-boxed product with a 100-page novella, brilliant screen detail, a two-player option and a highscore table?

GRAPHICS

Easily explained. How impressive are the screen graphics – large, colourful and detailed with neat scrolling? Is the animation smooth? How much variety is there? Our mag photos should tell you some of these points, but this category will tell you what you *can't* see from a pic.

SOUND

Is it exciting, effective, atmospheric, varied – or just simple and repetitive? Are there music and sound FX; is there speech? Is it technically brilliant? Above all, do the music/sound FX enhance the game or detract from it?

HOOKABILITY

As we explained way back in Issue 1 of ZZAP!, this is a cross between playability, addictiveness and how the game feels. If this mark is low, it could means that there's a clumsy control method, or loads of instructions to plough through, or lots of puzzling; if it's high it's instantly addictive and incredibly easy to get into. A low hookability rating doesn't necessarily mean a bad game.

LASTABILITY

The *depth* of a game, which, to some extent, takes into account the Hookability rating. Does it have loads of levels or screens? A game with loads of screens that's unaddictive scores low in both categories; one which is difficult at first but has plenty of depth scores low on Hook but high on Lastability; one which is compulsive but is quickly solved scores high on Hook and low on Lastability. Easy, eh? Please yourself, then.

OVERALL

The key mark: not an average of the previous five ratings, but the reviewers' personal rating of the game as a whole, followed by a comment in summary. It also incorporates the value of a game – a Sizzler at £9.99 might not still be a Sizzler at £14.99 . . .

And that's about it for this froody and frozen March issue. Watch out for the word 'gadgi' – it's a bit contagious around here at the moment. Does anyone know what it means?

Gordon Houghton

Gordon Houghton

"ATTENTION! COULD MR. JESSE PHONE US ALL AT ZZAP! ABOUT AN APPOINTMENT FOR APRIL 26TH! THANK'YOU!"

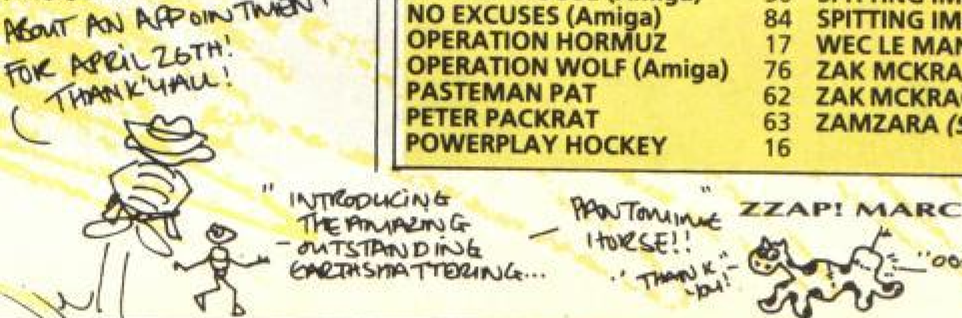


▲ The ZZAP! team and plant get at Maff. From the left: Kati 'Waaaagh' Hamza-creature, Art Director and general Zany Man, Mark Kendrick, Maff 'Rubbish' Evans, Lloyd (with paper bag) and Fat Git Gordo



▲ After an unresolvable disagreement over editorial content on the results page, Gordon resorts to stuffing Ken down the toilet

GAMES REVIEWED



"INTRODUCING THE AMAZING – OUTSTANDING EARTHSHATTERING... – PANTOMIME HORSE!!" "THANK YOU!" "OOF! BEHAVE YOURSELF WILL YA!"

the WORD

IT TAKES TWO TO TENGEN

Dominic and Mark, collectively known as Domark, have announced a neeeewwww label called Tengen. What does it all mean? Well, it's like this . . .

Them two people have acquired exclusive rights to produce home computer versions of them Atari coin-ops – you know the ones we mean, games like *APB*, *Xybots*, *Vindicators*, *Dragon Spirit* and *Toobin'*.

That last one is a particular favourite of Maff and Gordo's – we couldn't get them off it at the PC Show – and shouldn't provide too much trouble to convert, since it's basically yer vertically-scrolling shoot 'em up in stripy trunks and rubber rings. The only difference is, the screen scrolls *down* rather than up, as you pass through loads of different landscapes packed with horrible beasties and people who lurk in the water or on the river bank . . .

Until we review them, keep those eyes a-peeled and those fingers . . . er . . . ready. Sorry.



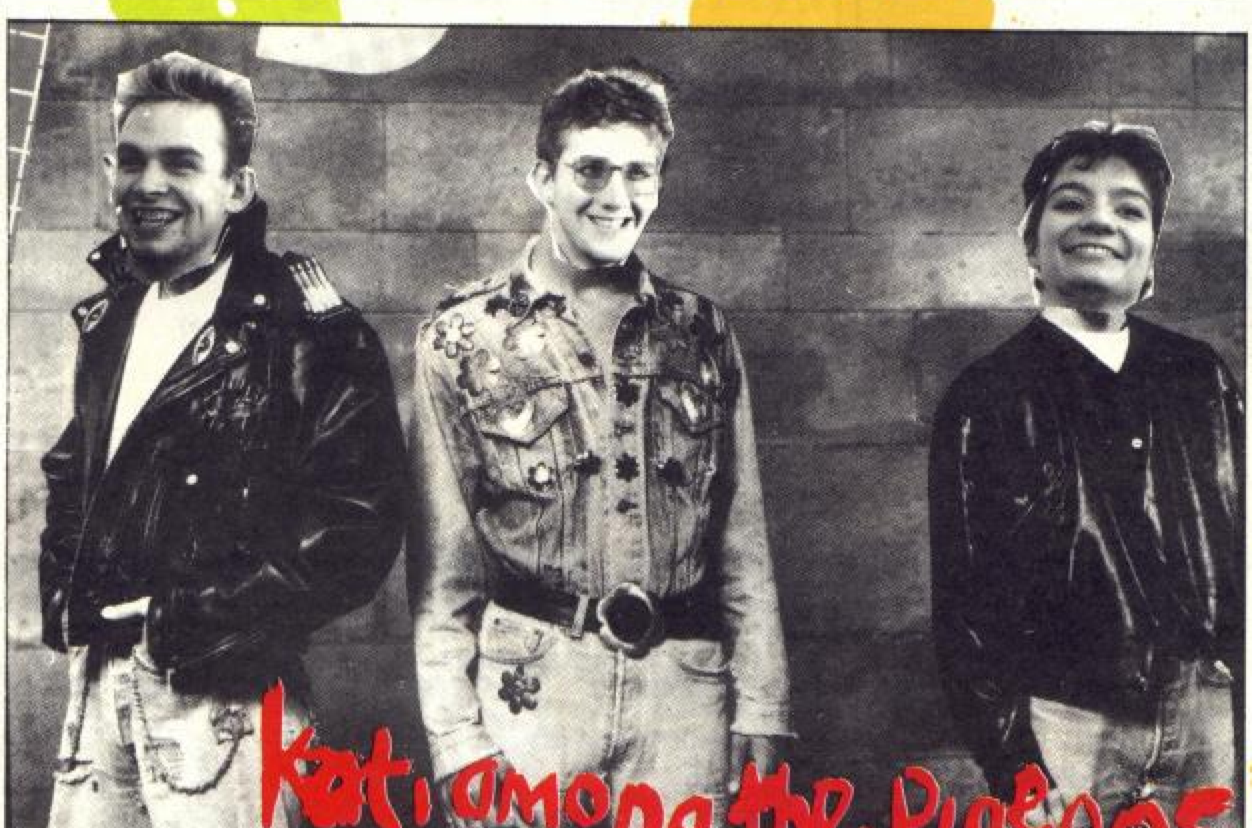


WHO'S WALKING ON THE MOON?

There's this bloke, right, and he had this album that sold 40,000,000 copies. He's won 8 Grammys and actually received an award from Ronnie 'Bonzo' Reagan for his many achievements. If you haven't guessed who he is, have a Farley's rusk and go back to bed.

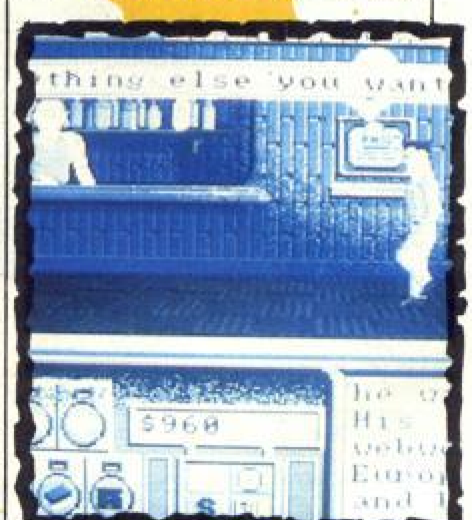
Still here? OK then, we might as well tell you that the man is Michael Jackson and those froody folk at US Gold have got the rights to make a game based on his film, *Moonwalker*. And that's it, really. Is that big news or is that big news? Please yourself, then.

ECTO AND ENDO MORPH



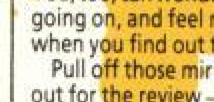
THANX TO THE CO.

NEURAMIGAPUNK



Remember that brilliant Cyberpunk Interplay/EA game, *Neuromancer*, which got 84% last ish? Well, Amiga owners rejoice, for this pic 'ere is a screenshot of the Chiba City classic on *your* machine. Ooooh! You, too, can now dip into that plate of synth-spaghetti, try and find your Deck and hack into Cyberspace! You, too, can wonder just what the hell is going on, and feel really big-headed when you find out the answers . . .

Pull off those mirrorshades and watch out for the review – soon!



WHO SIGNED ROGER RABBIT?

Activision did, that's who. They've taken three scenes from the film and turned them into sub-games: take a ride through Hollywood with Benny the Cab in an attempt to save Jessica; face the dangers of the Ink and Paint Club and that bloody huuuge gorilla; finally, biff them weasels at the Gag Factory in a battle of jokes – to the death! What's it all gonna cost? £24.99 on the Amiga – available RIGHT NOW! But watch out, all you 64 owners, because an 8-bit version is due out soon . . .

Keep an eye out for it – *p-p-p-p-please!*

The second big item of news from Activision is their conversion of the brilliant Sega coin-op, *Time Scanner*, due for release in April. This is pinball with a difference: four levels, each divided up into two screens, entry to the next only available by a *woo-eee-ooo*, TIME TUNNEL! The four levels are, just for your information, Volcano, Saquarra, Ruins and Final. Them Activision people have also added a special bonus screen – a completely new *Breakout* game. So you wanna know the prices, huh? C64: £9.99, £14.99; Amiga £24.99 . . .





SILLY NAMES INC.

Candidate for the looniest name of the year comes from Psygnosis. Wait for it . . . *Captain Fizz Meets the Blaster-Trons*. Right on. Anyway, it features simultaneous 2-player action, a split-screen view, 22 levels and loads of strategy. This press release that we 'ave 'ere states *(yyaaawnn)* that it's 'so gripping that playing it had to be banned from the Psygnosis office or they'd never have got it out on time'. Much the same thing happens in the ZZAP! office, guys.

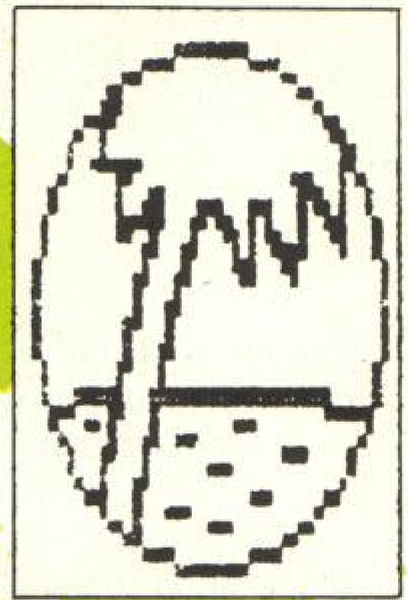
There is some good news, though. It's available on the Amiga at a snippety-dippety £14.95. Let's hear it for the price! *(News piece is drowned by tumultuous applause).*

OASIS NOW TRADING

Just a quickie, this news piece. All you real men out there, who think the computer industry too often falls victim to blatant sexism in software or in advertising, this is for you.

The Organisation Against Sexism in Software (OASIS) provides a monthly mini-mag which includes views, news and letters about all aspects of the software industry from ads to games, and from computers in schools to the mags themselves. There's a cost, though: £3 for a yearly membership, £1.50 for 6 months, or 50p per issue.

For details, write to **Sandra Vogel, 3 Alden Court, Stanley Road, Wimbledon, LONDON, SW19 8RD.** Think about it!



10 THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT KATI HAMZA

Just who does this madcap, zany, completely hatstand creature think she is? Why *does* she wear those skirts? Does she think she's a *girl* or something? And is there any cure? Well, let's face it, there's something inexplicably different about her – 10 things, in fact, that our useless team of rubbish investigators have unearthed from the refuse tip of sordid computer journalism.



☆ **Kati once had a fight with a pound of bacon – after ten rounds, the bacon won on points. Since then, she has been a vegetarian.**

★ Our far out girly opinion merchant cuts the heads off dogs, puts them on spikes and feeds them to the pigeons which hang around ZZAP! Towers.

☆ **Then she cuts the heads off the pigeons and feeds them to Maff.**

★ The one they call 'stupid' once tried to add up 2+2 – and got 1,893,465!!!!

☆ **Kati is a *girl* (ie, one of them things that's different from boys).**

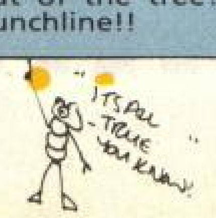
★ The offensive Hamza creature is often seen hanging around Ludlow's vast Roman sewer-system, counting the number of dead rats and faeces that float by.

☆ **Kati Hamza's name rhymes with the words 'Fatty Hamza' – but she isn't fat in any way (unlike the Editor).**

★ If you rearrange most of the letters in Kati's full name, you get the anagram, 'Ha! I am Tarzan'.

☆ **Kati's previous boyfriends include Johnny Telegraph-Pole, our own Ken D Fish and Eric Smallbottom.**

★ Kati's favourite joke is 'Why did the koala bear fall out of the tree?' but she's never remembered the punchline!!



VOTE FOR THE BEST IN 1988

Computer Leisure Awards

For the first time ever, you will be able to join with the readers of many other British magazines to decide who and what was best in 1988. Awards will be made to software producers resulting from your voting through, this, your own magazine, for what you considered to be the best games you have played on your computer during the past year.

Many other magazines are carrying this voting form. It means the results will truly be democratic, and therefore really mean a lot to those who receive them.

The votes will be collated by an independent company, to whom you should post your voting form, and the awards will be presented at the Computer Leisure Industry's 'get together' — Computer Arena — in March 1989.

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- AMSTRAD CPC ☐
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- COMMODORE 64/128 ☐
- PC COMPATIBLES ☐
- ATARI ST ☐
- SPECTRUM ☐

3) Please state what you consider to be the **BEST GAME OVERALL** of 1988:

4) Which Software House do you choose as being the most consistent in producing high quality computer games during 1988:

2) Please name your choice of best game (from the format ticked above) of 1988:

1. Best ARCADE game

2. Best ADVENTURE game

3. Best STRATEGY/WAR game

4. Best MUSIC with game

5. Best USE OF GRAPHICS

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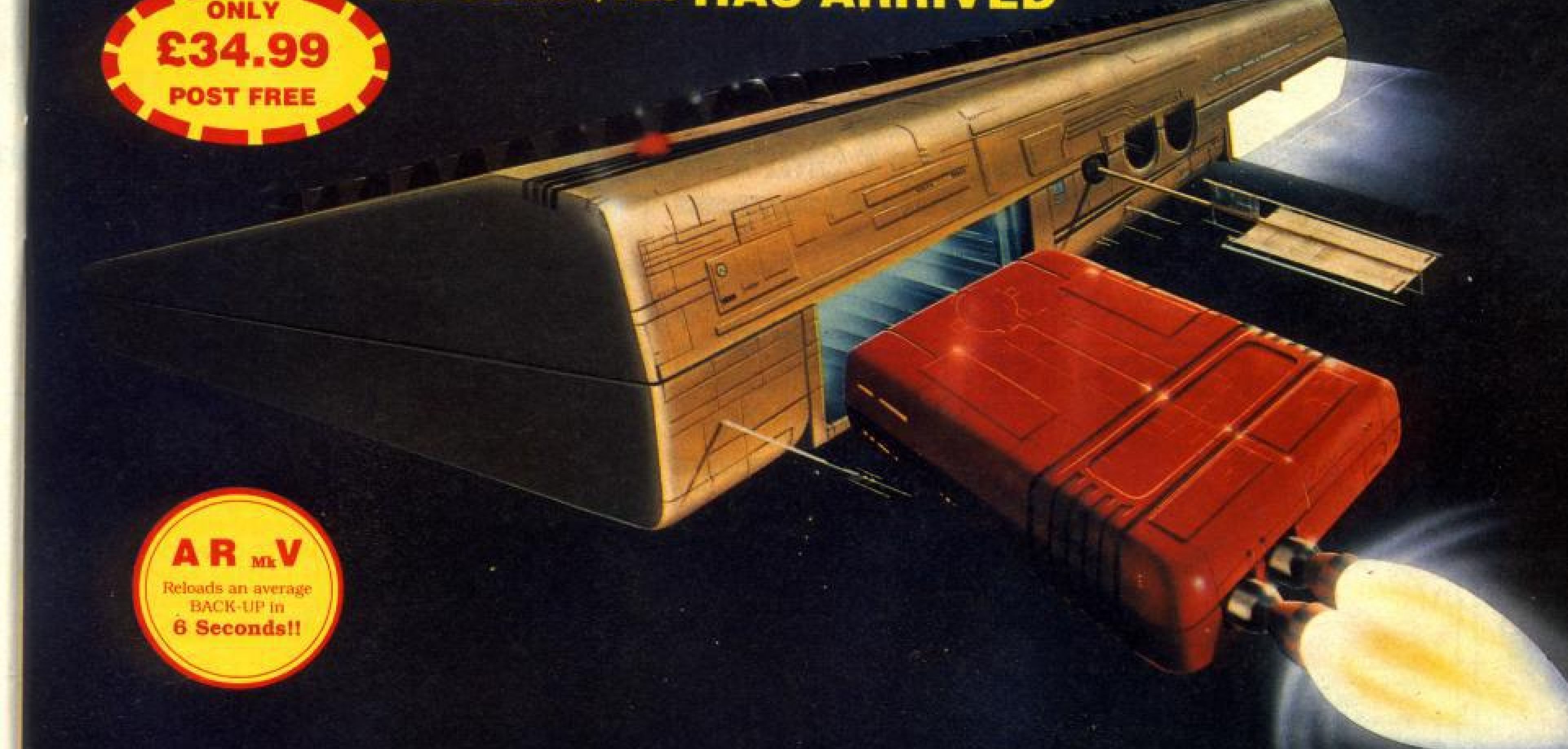
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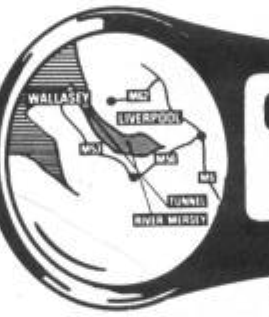
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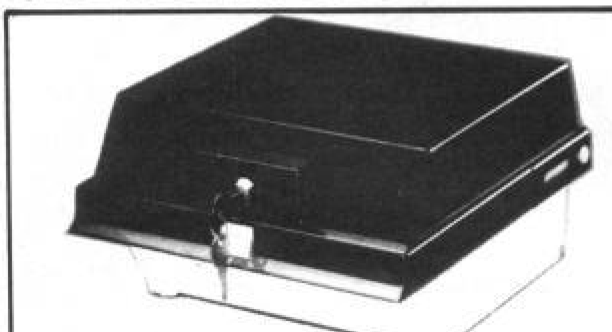
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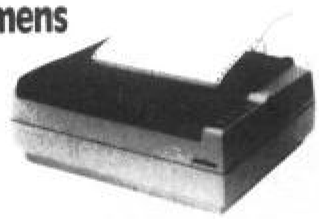


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TRADE ENQUIRIES WELCOME

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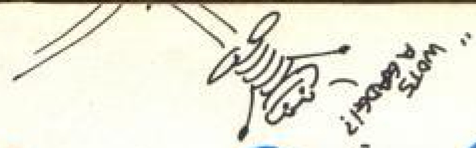
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Whassall this Gadgi new Reviews stuff, then?

Oi! Listen 'ere you lot! After 47 issues of your favourite Commodore magazine, we thought it was time we slapped the chicken entrails onto the ouija board and re-examined our reviewing system.

What you'll see in this month's reviews is the result of a bag of peanuts, some manic text coding and lots of putting hands under chins in classic 'thinker' pose. We hope you like it – but if there's anything you find particularly repulsive and you can't sleep at night because of headaches and nausea, write into Lloyd and we'll see what we can do. It's your magazine an' all that an' everyfin' – so don't go throwing up on our account.

What ZZap!'s got

- Comprehensive reviews: all 3 reviewers play every game extensively each month, even when there are only 2 comments, so you can be sure of getting a fair and honest set of opinions.
- All the latest games and biggest names – and we all argue about *exactly* what marks they should be given. In fact, Maff has still got his arms and legs in plaster after Issue 46's 'discussions'.
- Reviewers who are all mad about games. They're also all mad.
- Fax boxes, giving you info about the game, its programmers, technical details and stuff like that; you also get a mixture of daft and useful captions.
- The conversion factor: a rating for coin-op conversions.
- Ludlow's most famous fish (Ken).
- Proper budget reviews – not some piddling round up: we realise how important budget stuff is, so each game has a colour screenshot and an extensive summary.
- Update boxes – so that you know just where your version stands.
- 0898 competitions – you can win mega-amazing prizes just by picking up the phone and answering some easy-peasy questions. Oooh!

What ZZap!'s not got

- Reviews of pre-production or unfinished copies, *unless* we've got the permission of the software house involved.
- Black-and-white photos of games – you pay £1.25 for the magazine, so we think you're entitled to reviews in colour.
- Recipes, car mechanic tips, nude photographs (excluding fish) and Derek Batey.
- Business software. Yeuch. Boring stuff, that.
- Paul Glancey. Sorry, he's gone.



THE PERCENTAGES

over 96%
A GOLD MEDAL. Any game awarded this is either state of the art, the best game of its type, or original and incredibly addictive. It's rarely awarded – so miss Gold Medals at your peril!

90-96%
A SIZZLER (or, for budget games, a Silver Medal). Slightly more common, and awarded to any addictive and enjoyable game that we think is a 'must buy'.

70-89%
Games awarded percentages in this bracket are usually very good but lack something – that spark of originality, addictiveness or lastability – which would give them Sizzler status. Definitely worth checking out, though.

40-69%
Games which range from the mediocre to the 'near misses'. Still worth a look in many cases.

10-39%
Only buy if you're a real fan of this type of game; otherwise, steer clear!

below 10%
Oh dear. Pure tackiness – only worth looking at if someone else has bought it, and then laughing.

all percentages take into account the value of the product – a very good game at £2.99 will get a higher percentage than one for ten quid.

ZZAP! GOLD MEDAL AWARD

SIZZLER

conversion 99 factor

CONVERSIONS

You'll probably get used to this logo very quickly – there's a lot of it about (oo-er, etc). Basically, we get the arcade licence in and we judge just how good it is *as a conversion*.

Don't go thinking this mark will reflect the overall mark, though, mister – oh no. For example, if the coin-op parent was a rubbish game and the conversion accurately reflects the gameplay, it'll get a high conversion factor rating but a low overall mark. Easy, innit? Like riding a bicycle with two wheels and a couple of stabilisers on the back.

VERSION UPDATES

Even if you don't have an Amiga, you'll want to know if a particular game is coming out on the 64 – and vice versa. Well, fret not thy cross-gartered stockings, for, wherever it's relevant, there'll be a 64 or AMIGA UPDATE box to tell you just when and where the corresponding version is coming out, and the chief differences we anticipate.

If there's no box, you can safely assume there are no plans for a conversion at present.

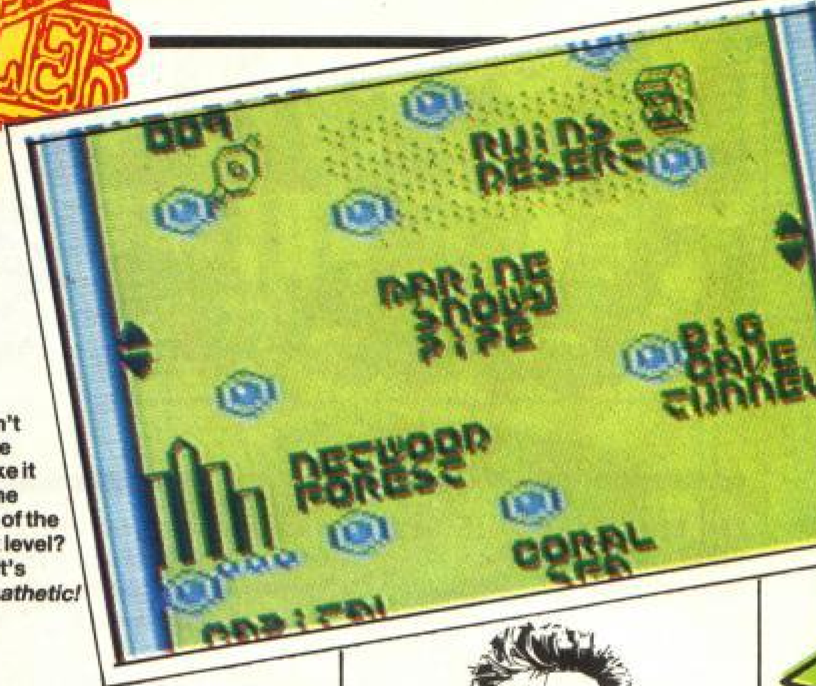
64

Even if you don't have an Amiga, you'll want to know if a particular game is coming out on the 64 – and vice versa. Well, fret not thy cross-gartered stockings, for, wherever it's relevant, there'll be a 64 or AMIGA

update

So what are you waiting for? Grease those porky fingers and turn the page!

LED STORM



► Didn't quite make it to the end of the first level? That's *paaathetic!* (64)

Go!/Capcom, C64 £9.99 cass, £14.99 disk; Amiga £19.99

●Vrooom! Vrooom! *SCREEECH!* Blast into the best race game since *Buggy Boy*

Ever since you were a piddling little space cadet in short skin-tight trousers and a latex balaclava hat, you've had one really special dream.

Remember those jerks who say you don't dream in colour – well they're wrong. This dream comes in glorious MGM technicolour, in colours so bright and strong you'd have to be a blind pygmy hippo with a bucket over its head to miss 'em. It's big, it's red, it's got shiny black wheels, it goes like a dream and it's mega . . . no . . . *ultra* cool.

Course, a car *that* sophisticated, with Laser Enhanced Destruction (LED to you, mate), self-opening ashtray, electric toothbrush, aftershave and travel Scrabble don't come cheap. It comes dead expensive, actually, and you (humble, hungry, two-bit parking attendant) haven't got the dosh.

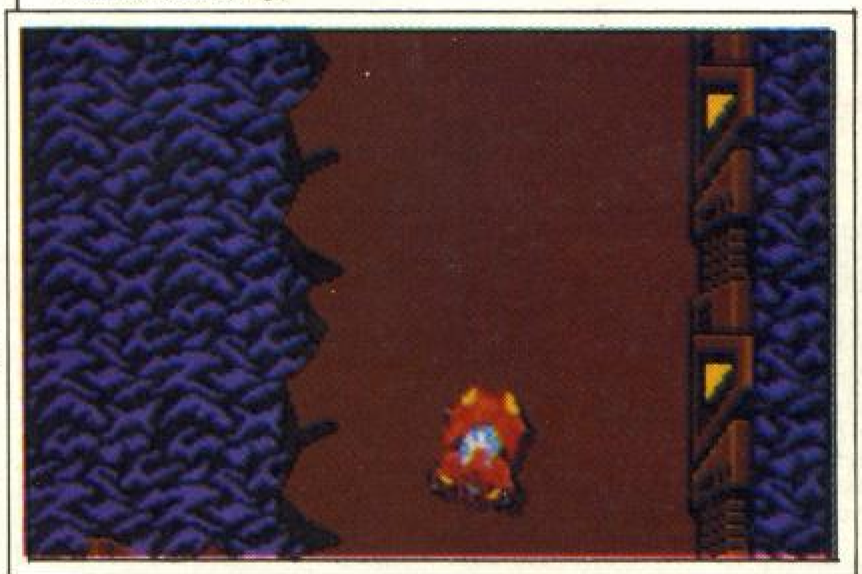
Or that's what you think.

Yeah well – one bright, sunny day, a fat fairy godmother with a big cheesy grin and horrible yellow teeth, comes lolloping into your life, hands you a half-eaten hamburger (no pinching), waves her wand, grabs the hamburger back, and lollops off – leaving a brand, spanking, shiny, fantastically trimmed, lean, clean firing machine in your life. It's even got furry dice.

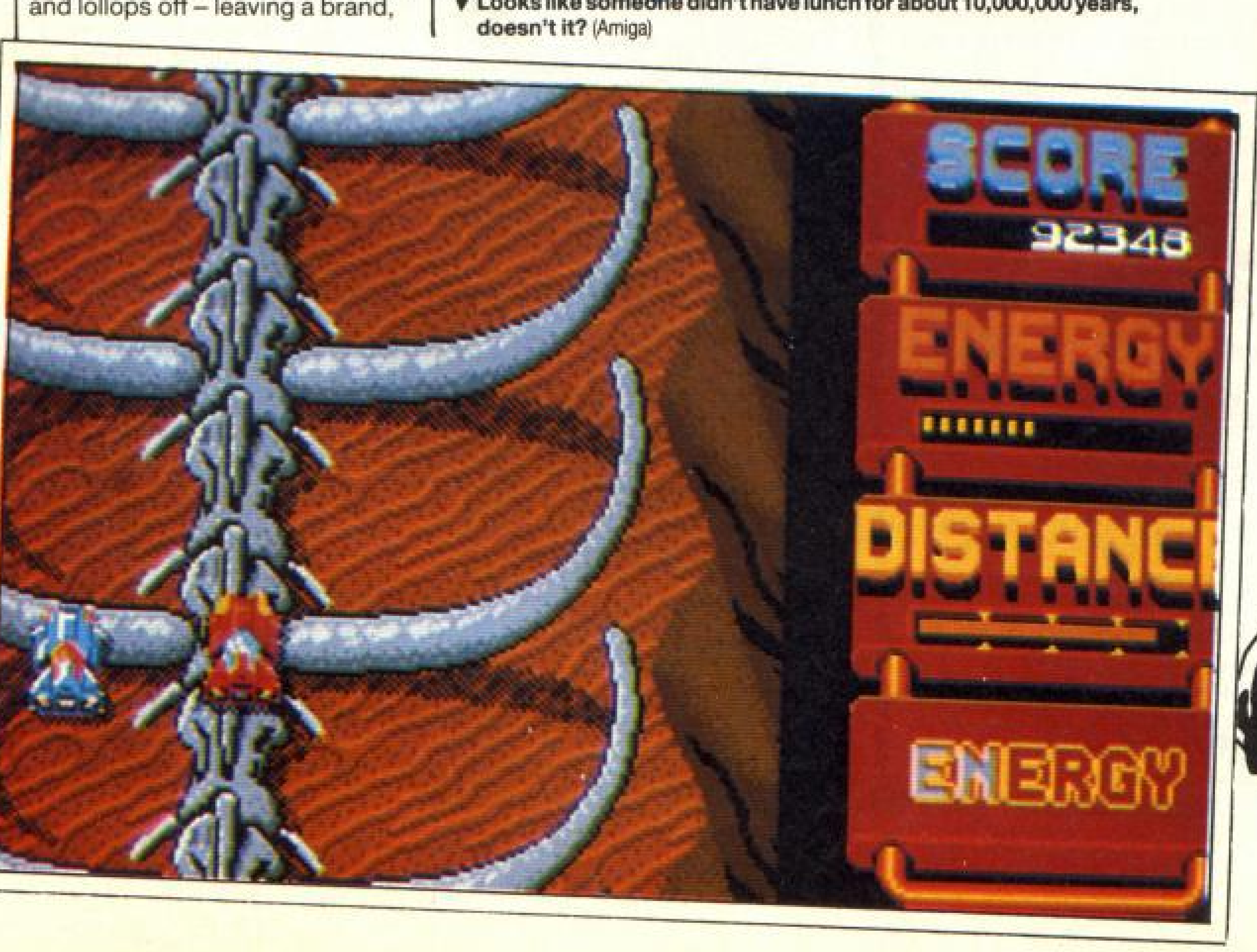
Next thing you know you're pitting your wits against the smoothest, coolest, least clean-shaven dudes in town in the LED Storm Sky City race. Brrrroooom!

As everybody worth their latex balaclava knows, this is THE race of the season. Survive all nine vertically scrolling levels and you're a well-hard, mega-man with pots of money who never needs to spend another day parking cars in his life.

▼ **Oooh – aren't those purply bits *nice?* Don't feel tempted to drive into them, OK?** (Amiga)



▼ **Looks like someone didn't have lunch for about 10,000,000 years, doesn't it?** (Amiga)

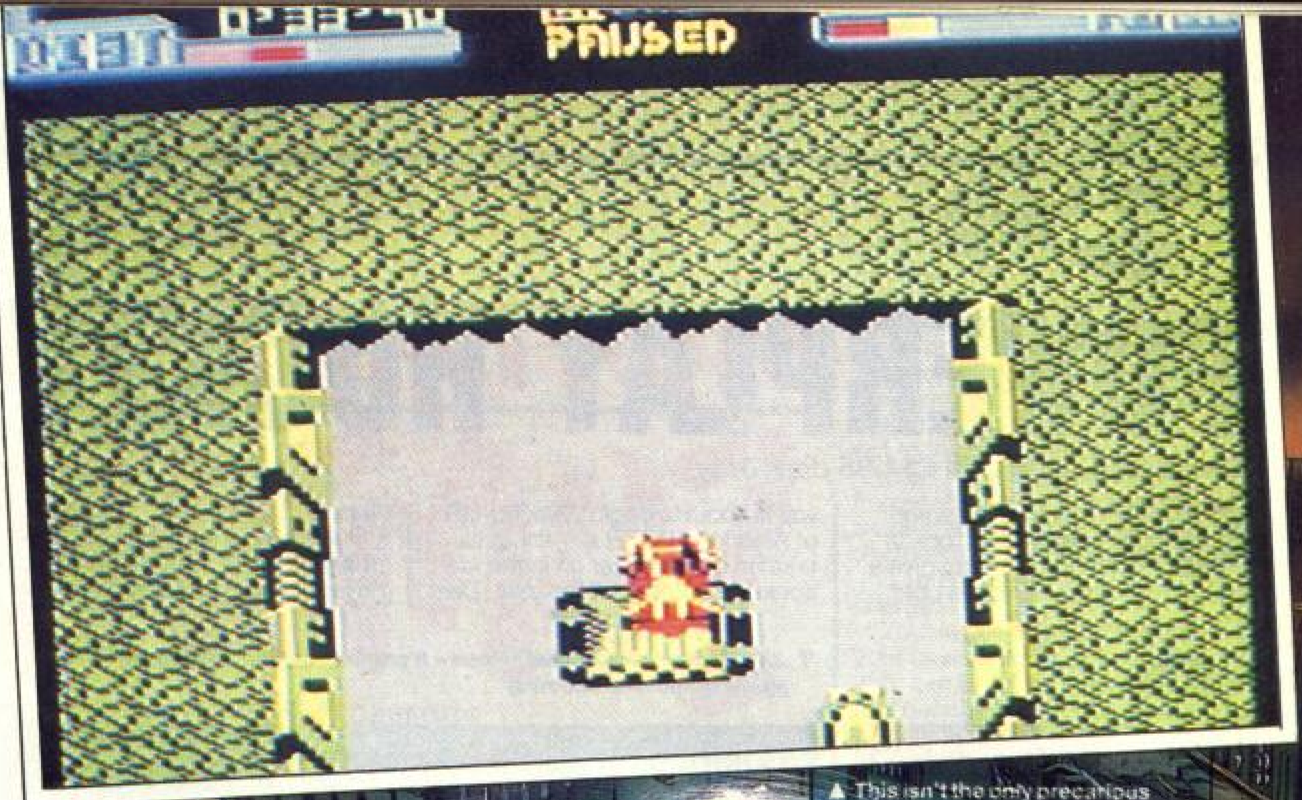




All you have to do is negotiate your fab machine across terrifying city terrain, coral reefs, precipitous

If anyone out there's a Spy Hunter **freak (like me) then get on your running shoes and sprint down to your local software shop right away – this game is definitely for you. It's not just incredibly playable – it's got loads and loads of extras (frogs, bullying juggernauts, canyons, energy pods) which give all that mega-playability an even more exciting edge. The Amiga version's slightly more faithful to the coin-op but I've got a real soft spot for the 64. The full-screen parallax scrolling, really brilliant soundtrack and totally absorbing gameplay make this my fave game of the month. Basically, whichever computer you've got, the message is this – do a headstand on a bed of nails rather than give this a miss.**





▲ This isn't the only precarious moment you'll have in the first level, Mr Fab Driver 64

There I am minding my own business and thinking things like 'I wonder if the next Capcom conversion is goingo be as good as Bionic Commando**' and 'I wonder what I'll have for tea' or 'When are' . . . *(get on with it, Maff – Ed)* and that sort of stuff, when** LED Storm **comes along and I'm glued to my chair for a couple of hours 'cos I refuse to play anything else. Both versions really capture the brilliant atmosphere of the coin-op, the sound just blows you away and the gameplay is more addictive than a crateful of cherry cokes on a dead hot day. If you want to do yourself a favour, get this NOW.**

mountain roads and devastatingly devious desert terrain.

If you wanna win (and boy, do you want to win) you've got to make sure that you grab all the energy bonuses, fuel canisters and invulnerability capsules and avoid all the juggernauts, pesky frogs (frogs?) that try to explode you, push you off the highway or slow you down. Oh yeah – and if you don't jump to avoid those gaps and canyons slap, bang in the middle of the track, you're dogmeat. Right?





THEM THERE TRACKS

LEVEL 1 – CAPITAL CITY
Sky-high interstellar flyover with dangerous gaps.

LEVEL 2 – NEIWOOD CITY
Rocky desert landscape opening into treacherously narrow valleys.

LEVEL 3 – CORAL SEA
Track over a massive coral reef Coral monsters and gaps.

LEVEL 4 – BIG CAVE TUNNEL
Deep inside a huge cavern. Juggernauts and breaks in the track.

LEVEL 5 – RUINS DESERT
Be careful to follow the path. Avoid statues and dinosaur bones.

LEVEL 6 – MILLION VALLEY
Road stage with lots of narrow spaces and holes in the tarmac.

LEVEL 7 – THUNDER ROAD
Outdoor scene with loads of death-defying drops.

LEVEL 8 – MARINE SNOW PIREWAY
Inside a large angled pipe, over a seething backdrop. Watch out for crates and grease.

LEVEL 9 – SKY CITY
The final frontier – under cover of clouds.

conversion 90 factor

Yaay! Get into some leather, rip up the road and have a fabbo, triff 'n' brill time. This has to be one of the fastest, most unusual and dead addictive racing games I've seen in ages. The graphics really capture that sense of racing up the highways, overtaking everybody, shouting really naff things and not giving a monkey's whether anybody gets out of the way. There are loads of clever little touches like having to waggle your joystick to get those croaking froggies off your bumper and the music on both versions (especially on the 64) is absolutely brill. Unless you want to miss out on a stonking good time, get this NOW.



64		amiga
79%	**PRESENTATION**	79%
	Clear on-screen presentation, course map plus loads of tunes and high score table.	
86%	**GRAPHICS**	80%
	Full screen *and* parallax scrolling on the 64. Excellent use of colour but jerky horizontal scrolling on the Amiga.	
94%	**SOUND**	90%
	Amazing series of synthesised title, high-score and in-game tunes on both versions.	
94%	**HOOKABILITY**	94%
	The fast-paced action means it's immediately gripping and instantly playable.	
90%	**LASTABILITY**	90%
	There are nine levels so there's more than enough incentive to keep that joystick good and hot.	
94%	**OVERALL**	**92%**
	Easily one of the most playable racing games ever, and a top quality conversion.	



POWERPLAY HOCKEY

Electronic Arts, C64 £14.95 disk only

Get into your helmets and shinpads, peeps, 'cos a match that's gonna give a whole new meaning to the cold war is about to begin. Yup, the US of A and the USSR are about to take on one another on in the ice hockey challenge of the year. Da-daaa . . .

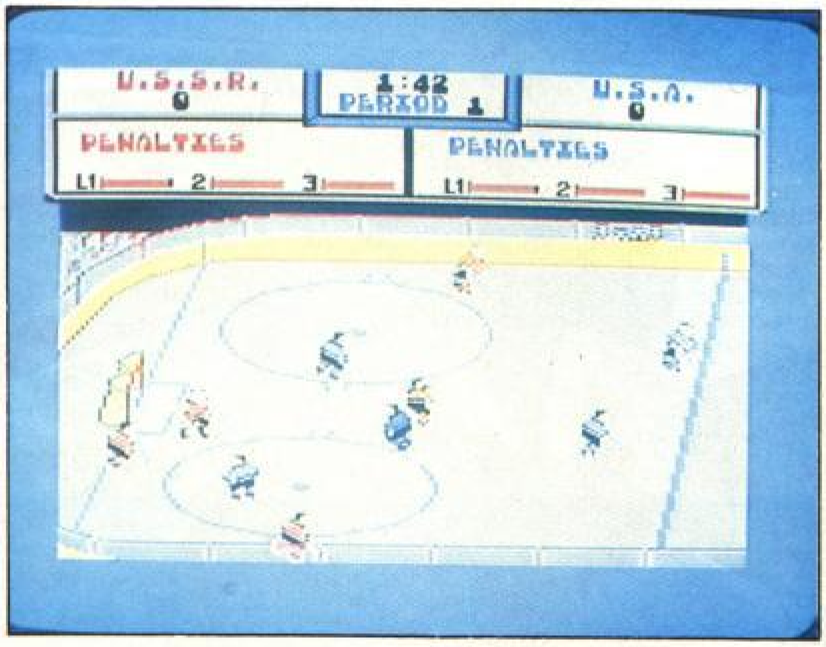
Hold it! Don't start trying to bully off right away. Pick the number of players, team size (one-on-one or five-on-five) and length of match first. Ready?

Right then – you're on a horizontally scrolling rink, you can try wrist shots, slap shots, faceoff, drop passing, body and poke *(oo-er)* checking. There are penalties for roughing and crosschecking, icing and offsides. In the five-a-side game, you have the chance to



GORDO

I'm far too bulky to be an ice hockey player myself, but I'm not averse to a bit of puck and bully in comfortable armchair mode. Anyway, I think I would have enjoyed this a lot more if the control method had been slightly more versatile. Most decent team sports sims let you switch control between the different players – I can't really see why you should leave that out of an ice hockey sim. It's not that easy to get to grips with the shooting controls either – dead annoying when you've got a computer opponent really into scoring goals. Only for really dedicated sport fans who shout 'ugga ugga' a lot.



▼ **Jolly hockey sticks, what? Nope – a group of macho tough guys grunting and slap shooting**



KATI

Am I the world's greatest ice hockey fan? Er . . . well no, but then this isn't exactly the world's greatest ice hockey sim – it's just average, really. *Whaddya mean,* you're all going to shout, *aren't there loads of options?* Well yeah, there are loads of options but what really counts is the gameplay – and that's not so hot when you can't switch players, when some of the passing and shooting controls are far too awkward and you move a tad-ette too slowly around the screen. Still, if you're getting this for the two-player game you might squeeze a bit of fun out of it – just not as much fun as you might have had. Aaah, what a shame!



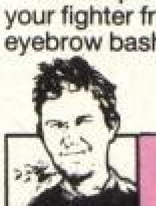
TKO

Accolade/Electronic Arts, C64 £9.95 cassette, £14.95 disk

He flies like a butterfly and he stings like a bee – he's the greatest. There's ain't never gonna be no more Muhammed Ali.

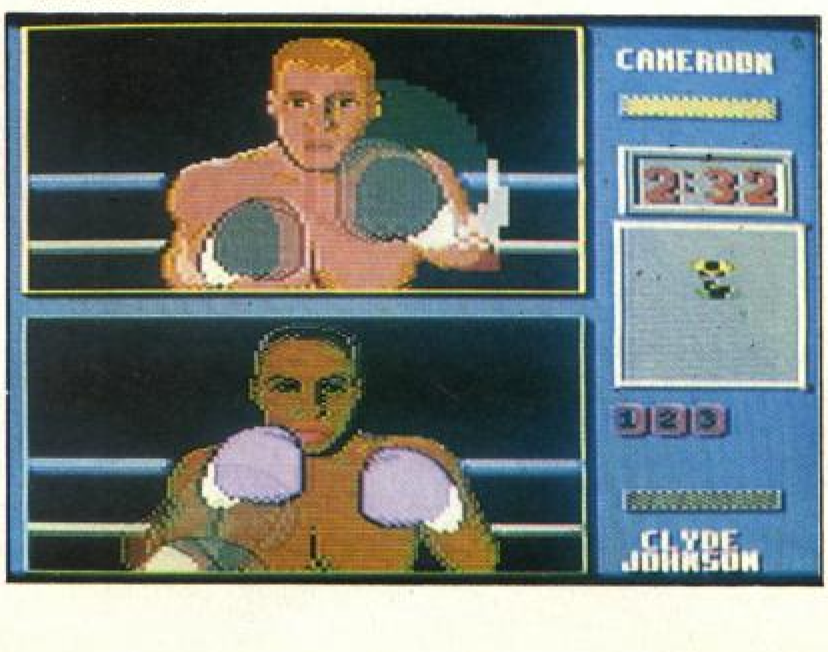
Or is there? If you fancy changing a bit of history, you can pit yourself against a mate or take part in the computer controlled championship right to the final title fight.

In championship mode you pick your fighter from a team of four eyebrow bashers (if one gets knocked out you keep on boxing until you run out of men). For the hot heeled action itself the screen is divided into two halves to give the first person perspective of each fighter. You see your opponent's head and shoulders only

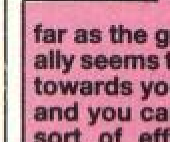


GORDO

Simulating boxing without including a ring, a referee or even the boxers' legs – doesn't sound overly promising and erm . . . well, it isn't really. The graphics look very nice but the boxing itself is really basic. You don't need much coordination to throw a few punches at a static face and the whole idea of timing them is made pretty ridiculous by the fact that you've got to keep switching you attention to different halves of the screen. Unless you're a really die-hard boxing fan, I'd think twice about buying this.

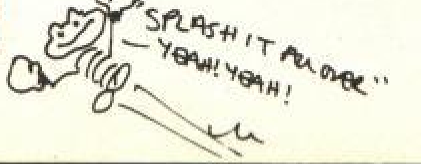


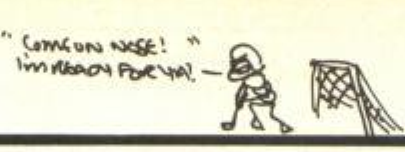
▼ **Fancy a red nose and a black eye for Spring? Then check out Accolade's *TKO***



KATI

You've got to admit, this is a pretty unusual way to stage a boxing sim and as far as the graphics go, it actually seems to work. Fists come towards you out of the screen and you can see exactly what sort of effect your punches have had on the other bloke. Trouble is, the gameplay just doesn't match up to any of that. Because it's literally head to head, there's very little skill involved: no matching your movement with your strokes, just plain old waggling the joystick around and pressing fire. Make sure you know what you're getting before you buy.





switch between three different teams of players (with different strengths and weaknesses) at any time. You always control either the goalkeeper or one other player.

Got that? Right then, get mean, get lean, get out there and GET GOING.

PRESENTATION 76%
Two-player game, three difficulty levels, two different game options, period stats screen and Gorbachev (?) poster.

GRAPHICS 57%
Fairly well-defined sprites skate around a slightly jerkily scrolling rink.

SOUND 43%
Simple, *puck, puck* sound effects and the odd victory jingle.

HOOKABILITY 50%
Awkward controls are more than likely to put you off.

LASTABILITY 52%
Once you get the hang of it, you might find a bit more to enjoy, particularly in two-player mode.

OVERALL 50%
A well-presented but technically limited ice hockey sim.

(though there is a mini overhead view) and select your punches using the joystick.

Points are awarded for number and success of punches thrown and unless there's a TKO (technical knock out), a display at the end of the fight shows how the decision was awarded on points. If both players get the same points, the winner is the guy who was highest on style. Far out, eh?

PRESENTATION 77%
Two-player game, very informative manual and plenty of info screens.

GRAPHICS 76%
Bold, well-defined boxers, smooth 3D effect punching action.

SOUND 49%
Title and victory tunes plus basic biff effects.

HOOKABILITY 64%
Once you've read the manual, it's easy to get the hang of this.

LASTABILITY 41%
It just doesn't have enough action to keep you coming back for more.

OVERALL 56%
An unusual, but very simplistic boxing sim.

OPERATION HORMUZ

Again Again, C64 £9.99 cassette

Money makes the world go round, da da da tra la la . . . Actually, that's not right. Nope, it's not money - it's oil. And I don't mean that stuff that comes out of the pores on your face, either – what we're talking about here is that thick sticky stuff they just happen to have a lot of in the Middle East.

According to this particular scenario, 7 terrorist missile bases are sending MIG 21 enemy aircraft out to the drilling sites and attempting to destroy them. Forget about the UN, negotiations, treaties and all that – the US has decided to take those bases out and you're the lucky, lucky guy in charge.

You've got three fighters and your basic mission is to fly from your carrier to the enemy bases and destroy them before meeting up with your carrier again.

Thing is, you've got to protect your carrier from Exocet missiles as well so it's a matter of juggling control of your four different weapons (cannon, bombs, air-to-air and air-to-ship missiles) and a protective flare to keep the mission alive.

Easy.

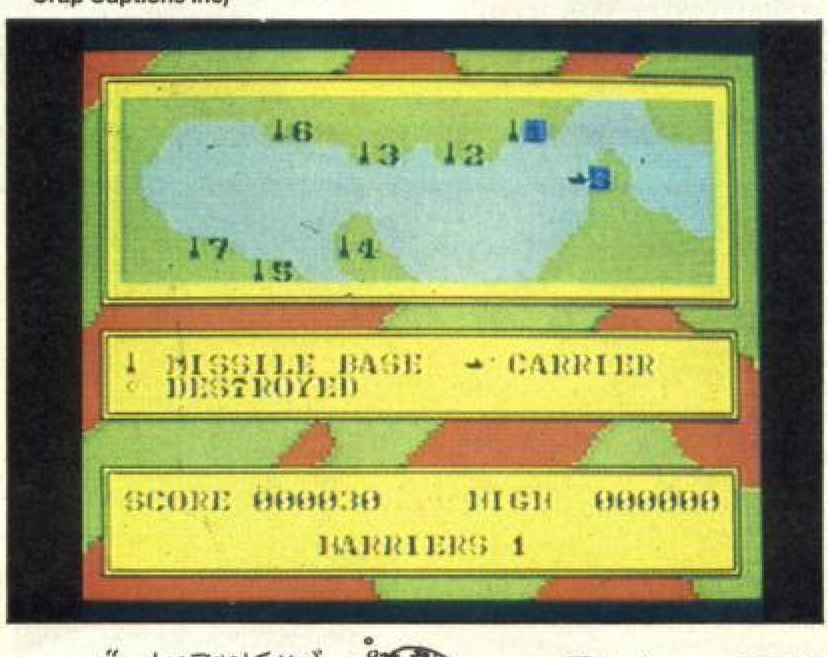


▲ Looks like there's a GULF between you and success in this game (geddit? Oh, go away, then)



I reckon even I could be a pilot if flying a plane was as easy as this. All you have to do is wiggle the controls a bit and your McDonald Douglas goes swooping dow.. towards the ground, performing acrobatic flying tricks, generally defying gravity and every G-force in the book. This is definitely no serious flying sim – unfortunately, it's not much of a shoot 'em up either. The whole thing is just a matter of flying over a pretty samey landscape, avoiding pretty pathetic enemy fire and then doing the same thing Again Again (geddit?). All this amounts to is the equivalent of a mediocre budget game – it certainly isn't worth ten quid. Oh – and I didn't like the politics behind it, either.

▼ Hey! Don't talk to ME about *Operation Hormuz*! (c/o Cryptic 'n' Crap Captions Inc)





According to all the bumph, this is supposed to be a 'realistic and highly detailed simulation'. Simulation, my foot! What we're talking here is pretty basic shoot 'em up with one or two slightly technical bits thrown in. And when I say technical, I mean looping clockwise or anti-clockwise and that's it. I wouldn't mind so much if the shoot 'em up part of it was worth sitting a couple of hours in front of the monitor for, but it's not. All we have here is a very routine, repetitive and not particularly interesting blast. Even at a budget price, I'd think twice before coughing up for this.

PRESENTATION 50%
Definable keyboard option and highscore table.

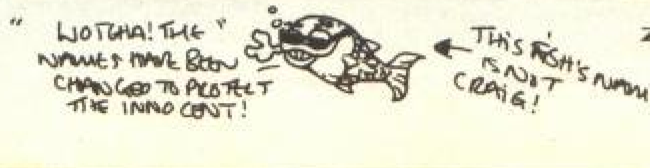
GRAPHICS 55%
Smooth scrolling and easy manoeuverable sprites. Apart from that, nothing fancy.

SOUND 52%
Pleasant title tune and a few *blip, blip, fut, fut,* firing effects.

HOOKABILITY 49%
There's curiosity value but right from the start there's not enough going on to really hook.

LASTABILITY 29%
Far too simplistic and repetitive to muster any lasting interest.

OVERALL 38%
Samey, repetitive and very basic for what's supposed to be simulation.



TECHNICAL DEVELOPMENTS

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BACKING UP: No matter how the game was loaded, it will copy from tape/tape, tape/disk, disk/disk, disk/tape. All backups saved in one single file. Cartridge not needed for reloading.
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FAST LOADERS: Disk fastloader "BOOT" uses no disk space! Loads backups in average 25 seconds. Tape backups reloading takes less than 2 mins!
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MACHINE CODE MONITOR: Best machine code monitor available. Intelligent hardware hides the monitor making it invisible & impossible to detect. Use it to learn machine code, a hackers dream due to it revealing any part of memory. Includes all usual monitor commands & more! Add poke/cheats from magazines.
PRINTOUT: Print out your machine code listings or even your favourite hires or multi-colour screens. Works on all CBM compatible printers.
SPRITE EDITOR & CUSTOMISER: Change all the sprites in a game, customise them with the free easy to use sprite editor.
EXPERT EXPRESS: Turns the Expert into a dedicated fast loading cartridge. It even loads programs over 200 blocks.
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RAVE REVIEWS: Don't just take our word for it.....
"The expert is the best possible buy" (Your CBM Aug'88)
"Highly recommended" (C.C.I. JUNE 88)
"The expert cannot be beaten" (Your CBM Aug'88)
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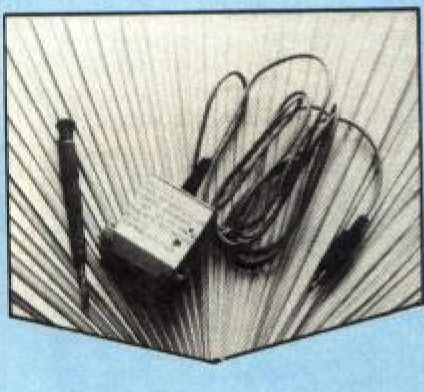
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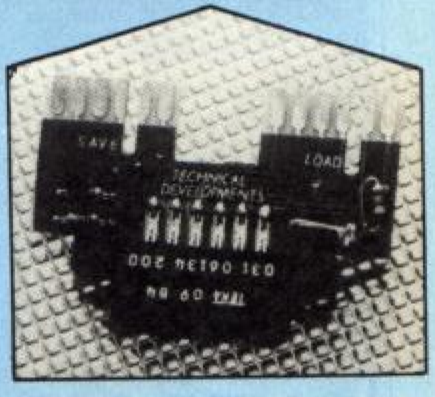
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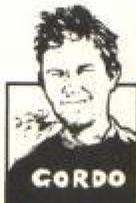
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Custodian

Hewson, Amiga £19.99

Overcrowding on planet Earth has become a serious problem. Space is at a premium, so instead of wasting ground for the burial of bodies huge tomb ships have been constructed in space. Unfortunately, alien forces have taken over the tombs and placed explosive pods throughout their interiors. Who's got to protect them? No prizes . . .



I always thought that shoot 'em ups were supposed to be games where you fire lots and kill loads of things, not a game where you have to be careful with each round of ammunition and even when you are the aliens don't die. The only feelings that this game produced were of frustration and helplessness – so it's one of those: *nice program, shame about the game.* A pity.



The blurb for Custodian **rates this as Hewson's 'most destructive game yet'. This is true to a certain extent, in that *you* get destroyed all the time – it's so annoyingly difficult! Sure the graphics are nice and the sound is well programmed but the game, the GAME! What happened to the game?! When playing a supposedly speedy shoot 'em up I expect to able to blast seven colours out of things, not watch as my weapons drift uselessly off the edge of the screen having inflicted no damage at all. Sorry, but** Custodian **is just a blot on the Hewson copybook.**

▼ **Gorgeous graphics and sound, but it's a real dog to play at times**



64

A 64 version *is* coming out, but it won't be until later on this year. Expect much the same gameplay (hopefully improved).

update

PRESENTATION 69%
Clear and precise appearance but the nasty weapons control is incredibly infuriating.

GRAPHICS 90%
Excellent sprites and backgrounds flying around over effective backgrounds.

SOUND 87%
Good effects and well played, if somewhat inappropriate music.

HOOKABILITY 54%
The nice appearance is attractive at first but the dreadful control makes you want to give up almost immediately.

LASTABILITY 42%
The programmers boast three levels of 250 screens each, but will you want to get there? I think not.

OVERALL 45%

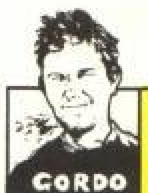
A nice looking, great sounding shmup which plays horribly.

Galactic Conqueror

Titus, Amiga £24.99

Life never seems to want people to live without some problem or other to keep them on their toes. For example, just after the Governments on Earth had managed to find a way to maintain peace, a band of galactic rebels decided that they wanted to rule the galaxy, not just liberate it.

The Government built a large artificial planet at the centre of the galaxy, named Gallion, to monitor and control the spread of the rebel forces through the system. A new type of fighter craft, the Thunder Cloud II, was built to fight the enemy troops – and it needed a special kind of warrior to pilot it. So the winners of the Off-Shore racing competitions were chosen, because of their flair for survival and fast reactions. You are one of these pilots, ready to do battle in your new mega-death-ship. Whoar!



Yeah! This is the kind of atmosphere we want from an Amiga game – loads of brilliant technical presentation screens and some ace instructions – just to start you off believing in the world you're playing in. As for the game itself – well, it's pretty good 3D blasting fun, but not outstanding, and the whole thing is a bit on the expensive side. Check it out anyway.



Let's face it, Titus' track record when it comes to 3D games isn't exactly wonderful, is it? I thought that Galactic Conqueror **was going to be another one of those weedy 3D efforts, but I was wrong. It's not bad at all! The presentation is excellent, the graphics well drawn and the sound effective, all backed up by an extremely playable game. The instructions (despite the spelling) are brilliant, even down to technical data and suggested battle plans. I hope that this heralds a new era of Titus games, as** Galactic Conqueror **is cracking!**

▼ **Flying over the surfaces of planets and killing things is the less subtle side to *Galactic Conqueror***



PRESENTATION 94%
Atmospheric intros and info screens and excellent instructions – apart from the grammar.

GRAPHICS 79%
Excellent 3D and well designed sprites fly over dull planets.

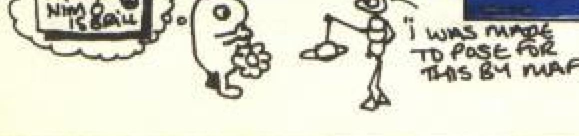
SOUND 87%
Great *crunch-crash* effects and a rousing tune which is marred by a horrendous edit halfway through.

HOOKABILITY 90%
Great fun to play from the first go.

LASTABILITY 78%
The planets are similar, but the strategies keep changing enough to keep you interested.

OVERALL 81%

A good space-combat game which hopefully sets the new Titus standard.



ZZAP! 64

JORDAN VS BIRD

Electronic Arts, C64 £14.95 disk only

Michael Jordan and Larry Bird are two of the most acclaimed players in American Basketball, both with their own personal style. Larry is a shooter whilst Michael (or *Air* as he is known) prefers the 'Slam-Dunk' technique – it's claimed they're rewriting basketball history.

Now you can take the role of one of these great players in Electronic Arts' latest sports simulation: *Jordan vs Bird – One on One*. You can choose to play either player in a straight one-on-one contest (to a limit, as a full game or as a warm up), as 'Air' Jordan in a Slam-Dunk contest, or as Larry Bird in a 3-Pointer contest.

The Slam–Dunk game consists of a series of set shots which must be performed in front of a panel of



▲ Which one's which? You'll just have to play it to find out, won't you! Nyah nyah nyah nyah nyah



I volunteered to write the intro to this because I like basketball, so imagine my disappointment when I was presented with a poor excuse for a simulation of any kind. Some of the graphics made me laugh out loud, especially the icons displaying the types of shot in the Slam-Dunk contest. How he's supposed to get into some of those positions I just don't know! The in-game animation is a bit odd as well, in fact I'm sure I saw the players jumping through each other at one point. I don't like this game much, but it's not as bad as Afterburner. **It's getting there, though!**



After Electronic Arts' signed up the talents of Accolade, I thought that we'd be seeing some great sports simulations from them. Unfortunately, Jordan vs Bird **is anything but a brilliant sports sim. The most striking thing about it is the comical graphics – disproportionate sprites stumbling about in a blandly drawn endzone, wobbling on legs like rubber bands. Now this wouldn't be too bad if the gameplay was good enough - unfortunately it's not. Control is quite a chore in all the games and any score involves more luck than judgement. Fans of the two players involved will be cringing to see their heroes' names put to this.**

MENACE

Psyclapse, C64 £9.99 cassette, £12.99 disk

Picture the scene: the courtroom of the great Galactic alliance – and the leaders are anxious. 'The forces of the planet Draconia are becoming restless,' they say, 'It's only a matter of time before they come and destroy us. We have chosen you to fly a daring and dangerous solo mission into the heart of the Draconian system to destroy their world.'

You ask, 'Why? Is it because I'm such a fantastic pilot?'

'No,' they reply, 'It's because you're the only one stupid enough who doesn't think that he's Napoleon'.

'Oh'.

Weeeell, that's what it amounts to really isn't it? Why else would you be going to a deadly planet alone?

Soon you are off to attack Draconia, armed with a single-pulse laser pod and a matter converter. The matter converter allows you to blast debris, formed by destroying a whole enemy attack wave, to form weapon and power systems (listed below).

At the end of each level a huge monster appears that needs to be shot, oooh, *loads* of times to be



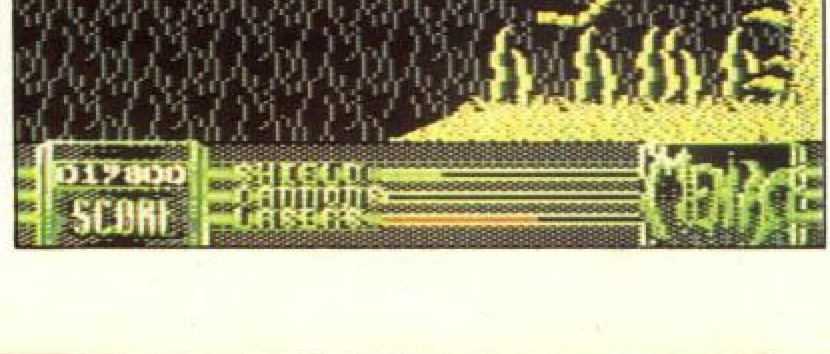
Despite being blessed with nice graphics, Menace **on the Amiga was a rather simple blasting game which should have converted well to the 64. However, something has been lost in the translation. The first thing that strikes you is the surprisingly weak presentation, which adds very little in the way of atmosphere, not to mention the slow and tedious multiload. The game itself is rather poor, lacking the necessary frenetic quality that a shoot 'em up needs. The pace is lacking partly due to the fact that to compensate for the lack of aliens there is a huge gap between formations to make the levels longer. Rather a cop-out in my view.** Menace **isn't a completely crap game, it's just that it's not good enough to stand out in the already crowded world of quality shoot 'em ups.**



I had an inkling that Menace **would be a might disappointing when it was necessary to type in RUN to get the title screen to appear. Not the most user friendly loading system in the world! When the game did finally appear I can't say I was overly impressed. Visually it's half-baked, even to the standard of leaving black blocks around the edges of the foreground graphics. The gameplay is dull and unrewarding, so that even when you do complete a level you think 'so what?' Where is the pace? Where is the excitement? Where is the tension? Not in this game that's for sure. Remarkably average.**

- **Bonus Score**
- **Fit/arm cannons**
- **Fit/arm lasers**
- **Increase maximum speed**
- **Outrider (side guns)**
- **Force field**
- **Refresh shields**

▼ Great graphics, great sound, great gameplay – and great joke, Mr Caption Writer



judges, the winner being the player with the highest score after a number of dunks.

The 3-pointer contest is set over a 60 second time limit, inside which Larry must score as many 3-point baskets (ie, outside the line) as possible.

PRESENTATION 79%
Loads of options rescue the rating since the general appearance is sloppy.

GRAPHICS 31%
Hilarious icons and wibbly sprites. The backgrounds aren't much to shout about either.

SOUND 12%
Thoroughly disastrous tune and the worst of spot effects.

HOOKABILITY 37%
It'll take you a while to play all the games once . . .

LASTABILITY 29%
. . . but it's debatable whether you'll want to play them again.

OVERALL 32%
A disappointing sports simulation from a company that has given us much better.

killed. If you do manage to kill this 'menace' *(ha ha! OK, maybe not. Ahem!)* then the next level is loaded and you must continue to do death with the next set of meanies.

Can you fight your way through to the end of the sixth zone and destroy the 'Brain' of Draconia? Or will you just poo your pants and run away?

PRESENTATION 31%
Nice packaging, but the poor multiload and slow pace give the whole thing a generally sloppy 'feel'.

GRAPHICS 42%
Blocky and indistinct with a fairly drab use of colour throughout.

SOUND 46%
An average tune and some pathetic spot effects add little atmosphere.

HOOKABILITY 53%
You find yourself playing to see 'what the next bit's like'.

LASTABILITY 41%
The lack of rapid firepower puts you off playing more than a few goes.

OVERALL 49%
A *barely* adequate blast which doesn't really earn the asking price.

SDI

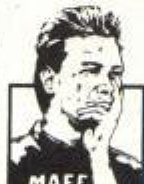
Activision, C64 £9.99 cassette, £14.99 disk

conversion 80 factor

Whenever anyone mentions SDI in the ZZAP! offices, referring to it as the *Star Wars* programme, Maff creases up thinking of Ronald Reagan dressing up in his Jedi suit and wielding his light sabre to ward off the missiles. What a sad sense of humour that boy has. Everyone knows that the Strategic Defense Initiative involves computer controlled satellites shooting the missiles with on-board lasers . . . don't they?

In this arcade conversion from the Sega arcade game, you play the part of one of the computers, blasting any invading metallic stuff out of the sky with your satellite mounted laser – *VOOOM!* Like that, see. No? Oh well. You fly your satellite around the screen unleashing your laser by way of a floating cursor, controlled by holding down the fire button.

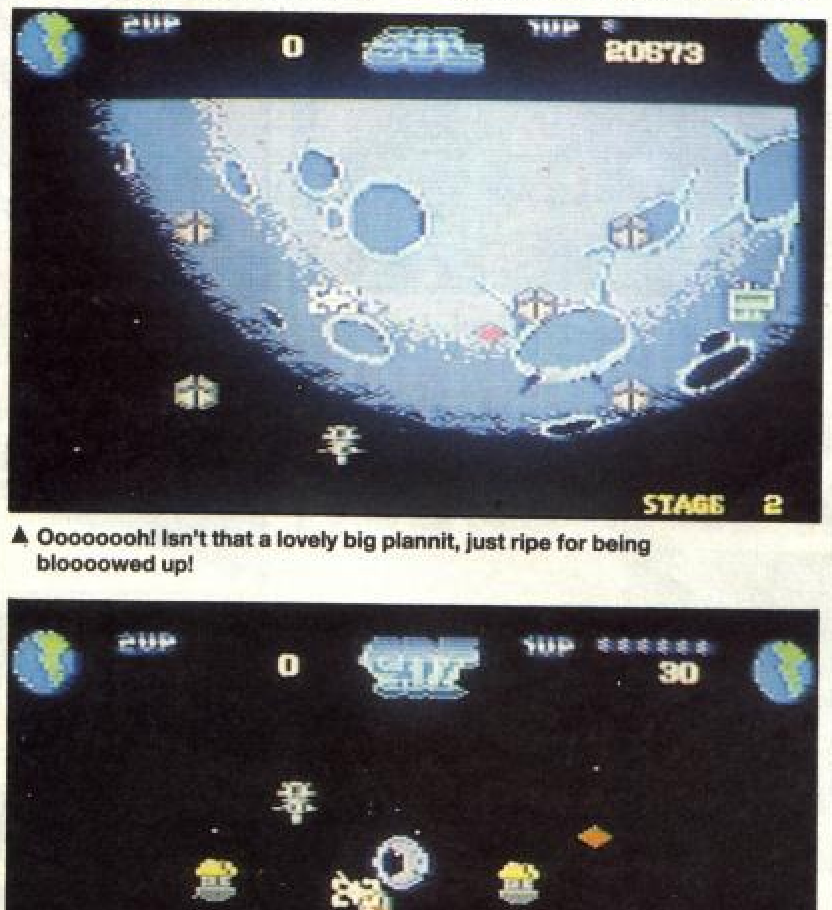
Extra points are awarded for extra skillful play and if you shoot perfectly . . . whoar! Bonus galore!



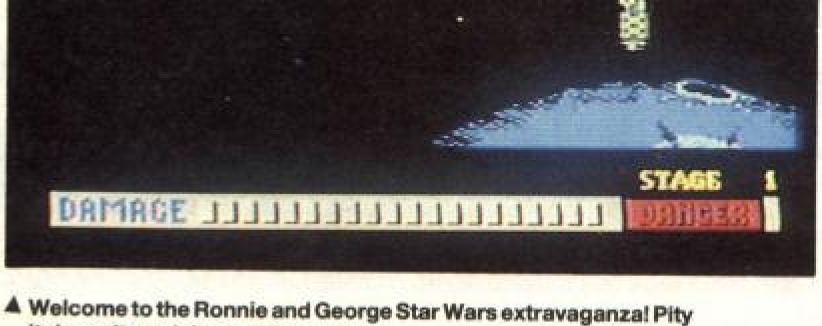
I've only played this a couple of times in the arcades, but it's still enough to see that Activision have done a reasonable job of converting it to the 64, even down to the dancing duck if you get a 'perfect' rating. The gameplay's all right, if a might repetitive, and is portrayed by some pleasant spacey graphics. The sound on the other hand is pretty naff, consisting of a few basic effects and a dodgy theme tune. Still, worth checking out if you're into the coin-op.



Having never played the arcade game I didn't really know what to expect from this conversion. It's not the most interesting game in the world, but to be quite honest it's not bad. There isn't really a great deal to do except shoot the . . . er . . . wotsit out of things but it's quite fun blasting everything that moves. The graphics are OK, with some nice touches (such as the shuttle), and I'm told it's quite close to the original. However, fans of the coin-op shouldn't be too disappointed, since it's still a playable game, even if it's not 'just like the real thing'.



▲ **Ooooooh! Isn't that a lovely big plannit, just ripe for being bloooowed up!**



▲ **Welcome to the Ronnie and George Star Wars extravaganza! Pity it doesn't work in real life, guys**

PRESENTATION 79%
Some good options and many of the arcade features, but the intermissions are a bit 'flat'.

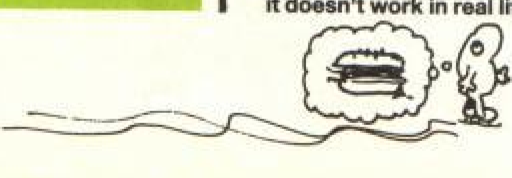
GRAPHICS 72%
Nice sprites and shading marred by a lack of variety.

SOUND 29%
Wee-splat! sound effects and a rather iffy title screen tune.

HOOKABILITY 80%
Really good blasting fun to begin with . . .

LASTABILITY 59%
. . . but it's a bit samey if you're not a fan of the coin-op.

OVERALL 64%
A good conversion of a rather weak arcade machine.



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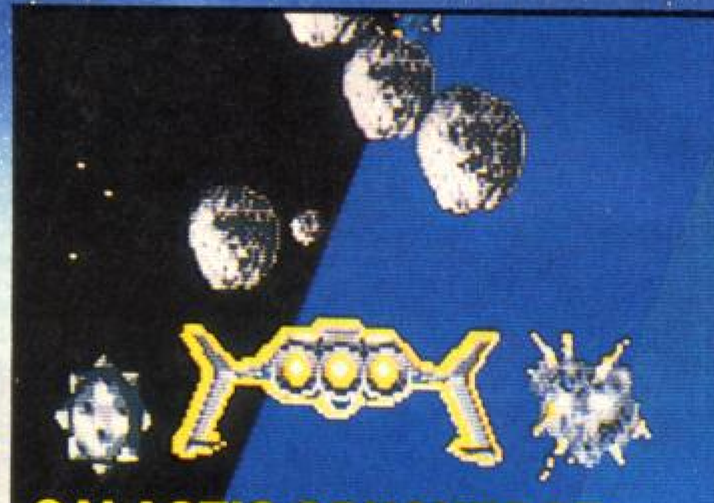
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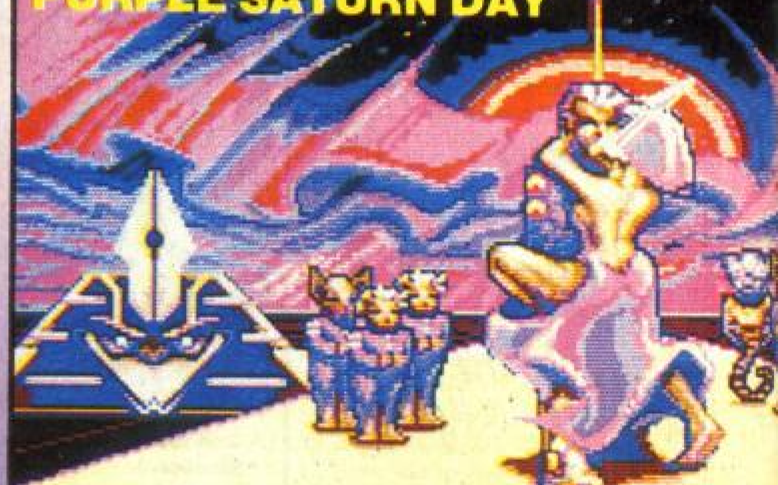
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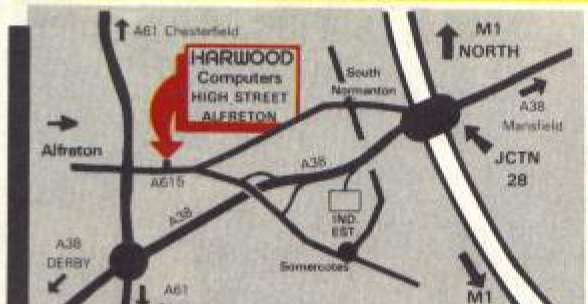
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Rocket Ranger

Cinemaware/Mirrorsoft, C64 £14.99 disk

●Will our intrepid hero save the scientist, fly to the moon and thwart the dastardly Nazis in the nick of time? Tune in and see . . .

Eins, zwei, eins, zwei, eins zwei . . . Twilight falls on Europe and hordes of goose-stepping Nazis are engulfing the west in a curtain of blackness.

Back in Berlin, that nasty little bloke with the most dangerous inferiority complex ever (much worse than Maff's) and a really silly black moustache is plotting to take over . . . guess what? The East? America? Africa? Nope – the whole of the rest of the world. Heil Hitler an' all that.

How's he gonna do it then? Well, listen carefully, 'cos I'll only say this once. There's enough lunarium (a very secret and dead powerful mineral) on the moon to build just the right number of lunarium bombs. Once you've mined it using a slave colony of chain gang women, terrorised by big metal boots and heavy whips, all you have to do is put it in a rocket, send it back to earth, get a few scientists together and (hey presto) you've got a weely big stockpile of lunarium bombs.

Got that so far? Right. Next thing. Drop all the bombs all over the world and the IQ of males everywhere is reduced by 30%. After that you'll probably have a planet ruled by women, but good old Adolf hasn't thought of that yet. All he wants is a great stonking pile of lunarium and that's exactly what he thinks he's gonna get.

Aha! But will he? Cue ultra-dramatic music, wibbly sound effects, black and white flashes, *ninnnnngh, ninnnngh, oooh wooh*, etc. Big, loud, very serious voice coming up. *BUT WILL HE?*

Well . . . er . . . it depends on you, me old son, dunnit? That's 'cos you're that hunky, cool and mega-muscly Rocket Ranger bloke, the only secret spy to propel himself around the world using a lunarium driven power pack. If you want to save the world, you've got to infiltrate all the Nazi rocket factories, find enough bits to make your own rocket, nip off to the moon and destroy the dreaded, horrible, nasty lunarium base. Hurrah!

Hang on, hang on, you haven't done it yet, dummy. Before you even get anywhere near the celebrating bit, you've got to rescue a kidnapped scientist and his daughter, try to disable a highly explosive Zeppelin without blowing it up, give instructions to five secret agents, act on their findings, take trips to South America, gun down Luftwaffe fighters and remember to pick up all them gadgi little rocket bits.

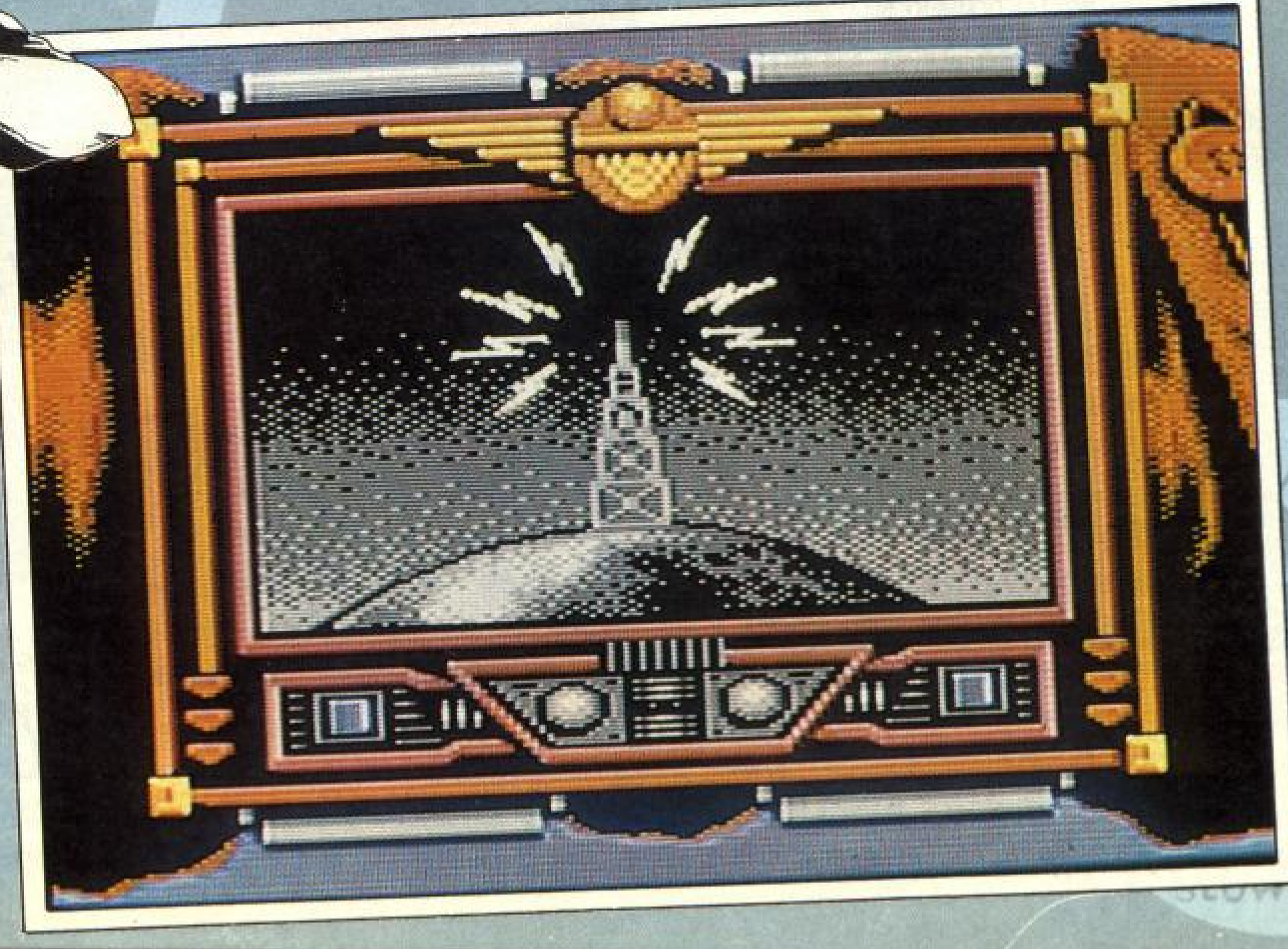


Was I impressed with this when I first saw it, or was I impressed? Well yes, actually, I was really, ultra impressed and that doesn't happen to me all that much when I see Cinemaware products – usually, it's a 'nice graphics, shame about the gameplay' sort of situation. Well, Rocket Ranger **has absolutely fantastic graphics which make very professional use of the good ol' 64 *and* the sort of fast-action serial plot you can really get your gnashers into. So what else has it got? Great presentation, pretty packaging and some extra-atmospheric music and sound effects. If you've got a disk drive, sell your pet hamster but don't miss this.**



Well, I was dead impressed by the Amiga version of Rocket Ranger **but I'm really knocked over by what they've done with the 64. The graphics, the sound, the presentation, all the gameplay, just pushes the 64 right to the limit of its capabilities. There are so many clever touches (the SOS screens, the Ranger's shadow as he flies across the world map, the 3D) that the whole thing really captures the atmosphere of those 1940s serials you still get the chance to watch on TV. And it's not just that – there's enough to the gameplay to keep you fighting Adolf for hours and hours. Don't miss it!**

▼ You fool! You've just lost a couple of months sending out that SOS!



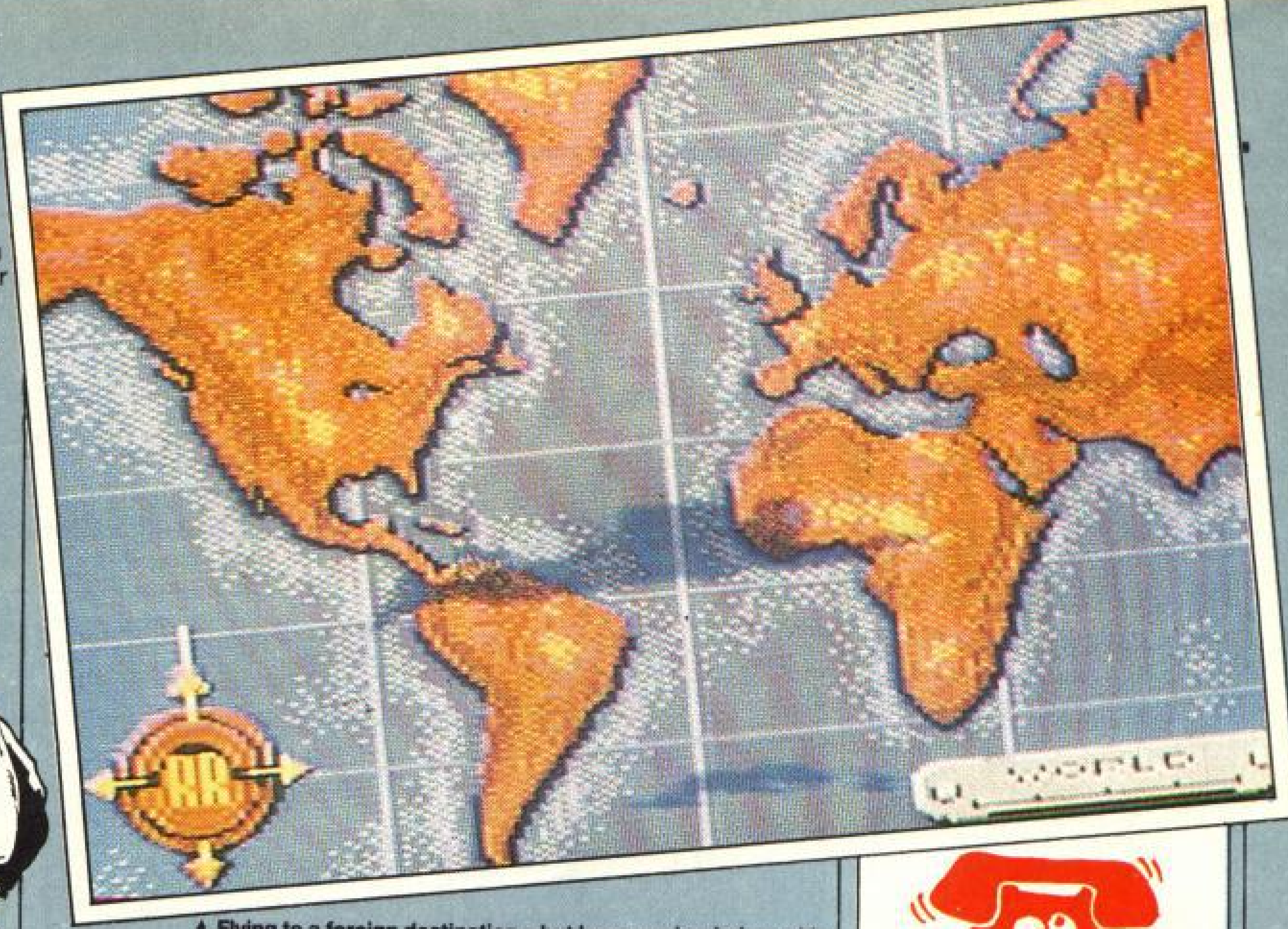
Only when you've got them do you get to go to that big yellow cheddar cheese in the sky. Yessiree – the moon.

So that's the mission, guys. The rest of it is up to you.

Toodlepip.



Mirrorsoft are releasing some pretty impressive games these days – what with *Bombuzal* and *Speedball* on the Image Works' label, and now this brilliant Cinemaware product. The thing that most impresses me is the presentation – for a start, none of the disk access is too long, and the disk swapping isn't really a pain. Then there's all those brilliant flying scenes between the action, the well-scripted storylines, the humour . . . It really brings out all sorts of skills – you need strategy to employ your spies carefully, quick reactions to fight increasingly tough German soldiers, a sure aim to avoid blowing up the Zeppelin – it's all in there. Basically, for disk owners, this is a must, especially at the price.

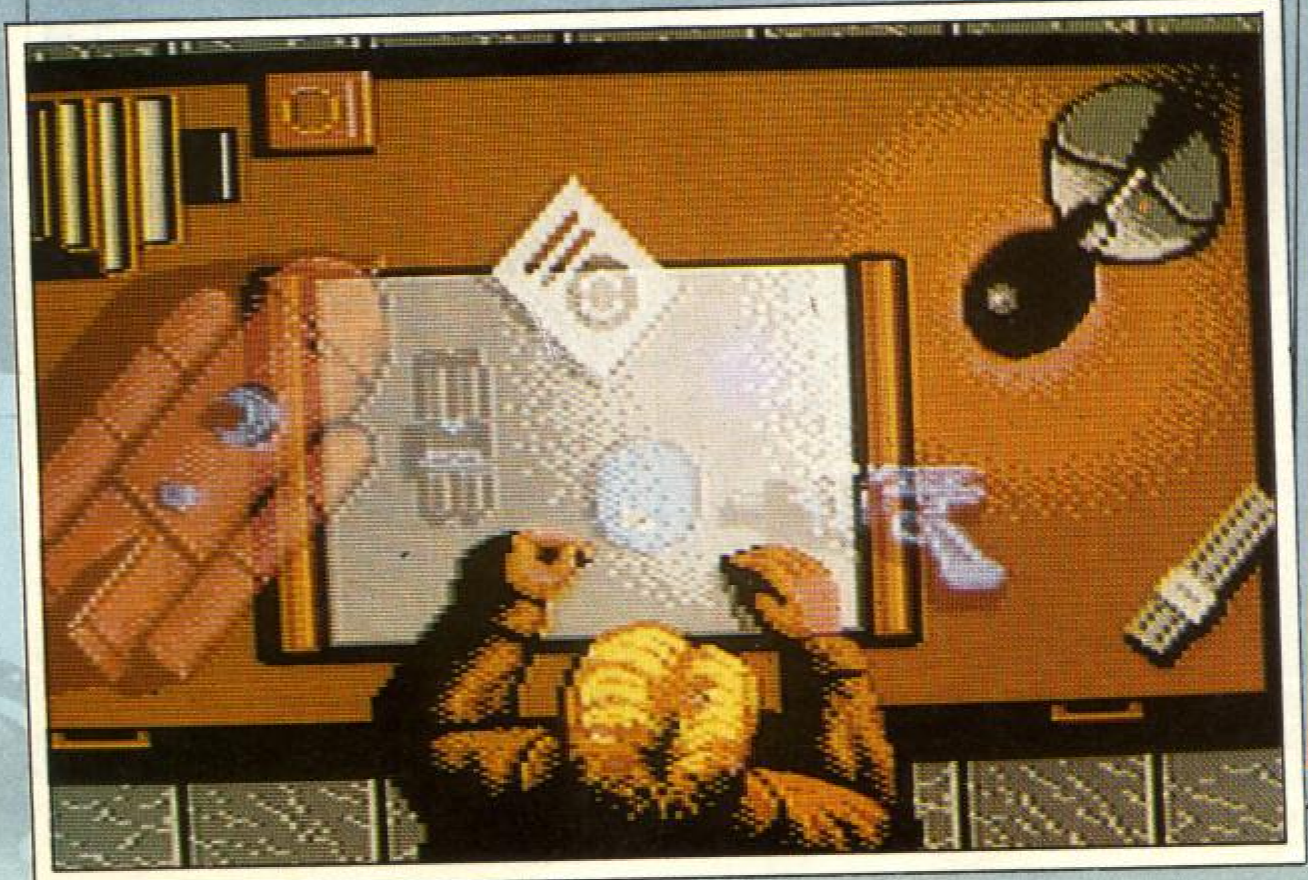


▲ Flying to a foreign destination – but have you loaded up with enough lunarium?



▲ The take-off – you're moving so fast that even Cameron's camera can't keep up with you!

▼ The moment of realisation – all the equipment that's about to make you Rocket Ranger appears before your very eyes . . .





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PRESENTATION 97%
Excellent opening and inbetween episode cinematic sequences. Just like being at the movies . . . well, nearly. Two disks – but the multiload is brief and unobtrusive.

GRAPHICS 94%
Detailed, striking and extremely original.

SOUND 70%
Dramatic music, but most of the in-game sound is limited to reasonable effects.

HOOKABILITY 92%
It's so atmospheric you can't resist having a go.

LASTABILITY 94%
An involved and demanding game plot means you just can't leave your joystick alone.

OVERALL 95%

One of the best disk products for the 64 *and* Cinemaware's best game yet. Not bad, huh?

DRAGON NINJA

NINJA PICK-UPS

Knife – dropped by some baddies and can be used against them.

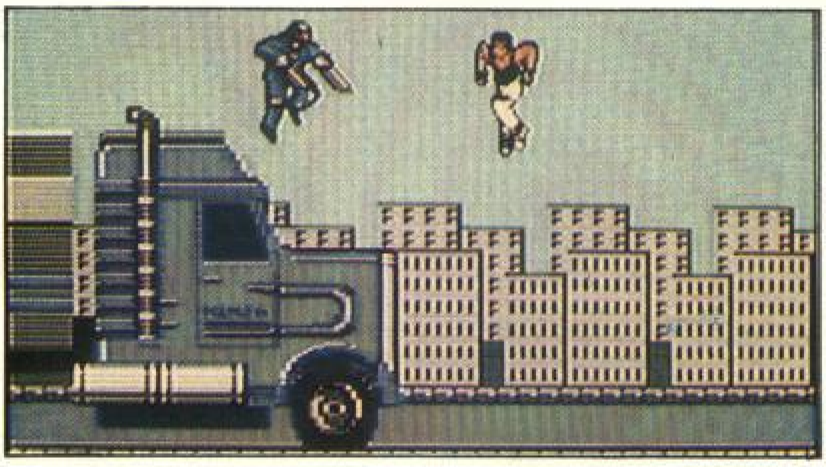
Extra time – if the timer runs out then it's bye-bye Ninja!

Extra energy – boosts your energy level.

Imagine, C64 £9.95 cassette, £14.95 disk

Yeeeeehaaaa! Ah, so! Honoulable Ninja *reaps* into battle! Ha haaa! Ow! Honoulable Ninja gets punched in gob and falls on his back. Maybe it's better to stick to computer Ninja simulations.

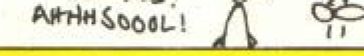
Well, what a coincidence! What have we here but just the very thing! *Dragon Ninja* places you in the role of a tough street-wise martial arts expert. Armed only with a pair of designer sports shoes and your fists, you venture forth into the thug-ridden streets bashing the baddy guys to bits.



▲ **With a death-defying leap our Ninja hero (the one in the white kecks) gets ready to kick ass and punch face**

Whilst on your vigilante trek, just after you've duffed up a fat, fire-breathing gang leader, you spot some suspicious looking characters bundling the president into a car and speeding off into the distance *(well Maff, that certainly sounds suspicious to me – Gordo)*. Leaping onto the back of a passing truck, you give chase. Unluckily, you just happen to have leaped onto the back of the Bad Guys gang truck. Oh dear . . .

Well you're dead 'ard and can pick up knives and fings and use your super punch power to beat up . . . say . . . a warrior wearing Wolverine claws. Oh, here comes one now . . .





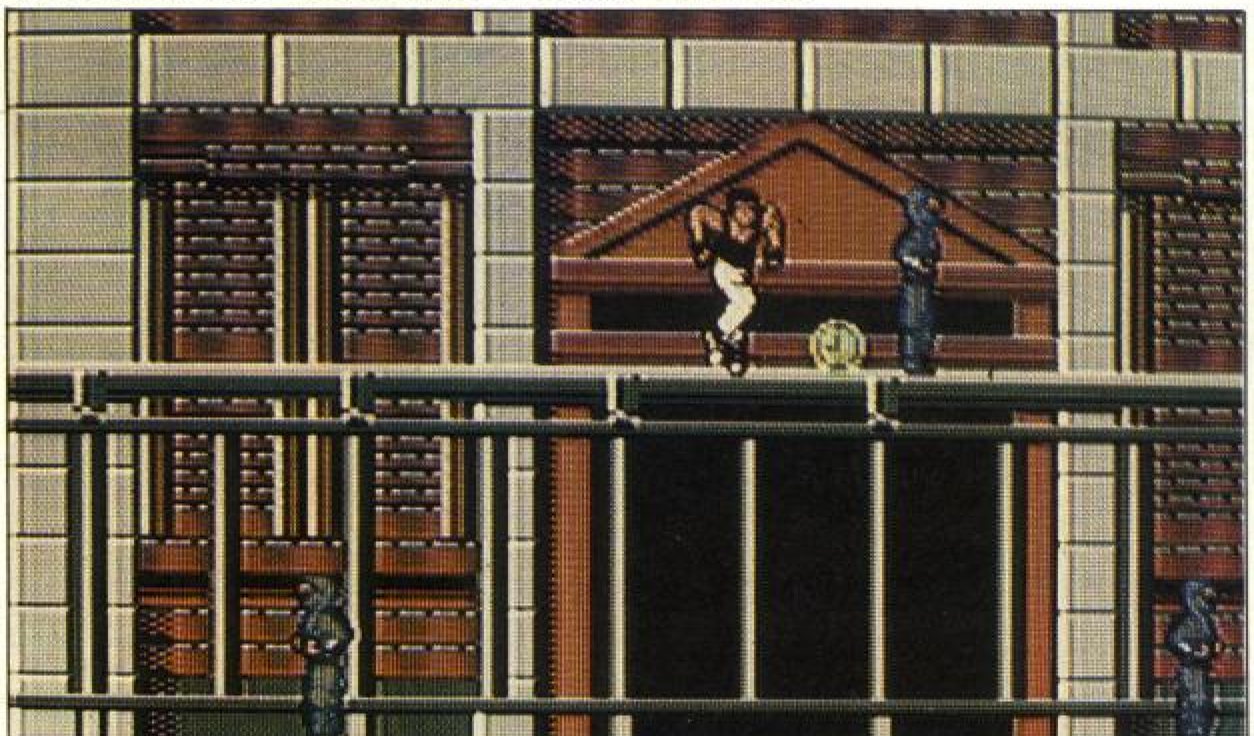
I found something appealing about the arcade version of Dragon Ninja **that many of the other games of the type were lacking. I can't quite place what it was, but Imagine's programmers have managed to capture it in their conversion. The graphics are very nice, with crisp definition and animation, but for some reason they go a bit funny colours *(local expression ©)* on the second section. My only real gripes are the lack of inter-screen presentation, decent sound and a two player option, making it (in my opinion) not *quite* good enough to be a Sizzler. Still, I played it for a while so that I could review it properly . . . OK, so I wanted to play it lots! It's an addictive and playable game, so take a look!**



They've done it again! Ocean have got a major license and come up with a cracking game. This time it's under the Imagine logo, but the same programming expertise (including Steve Wahid and Jonathan Dunn) has been put to good use. The basic action is much like many other martial arts games, but there are a few nice touches, such as the double walkways and the effective scrolling truck section, and the gameplay is fast and appealing. I'm not that conversant with the arcade version, but if it's as playable as this I can see a few ten pences going astray! Another great Ocean/Imagine game. How do they do it . . . and keep doing it?!

conversion 74 factor

▼ ***'Are you dancing?'* 'Are you asking' *'I'm asking'* 'I'm dancing'**



PRESENTATION 62%
Good overall appearance, but not much in the way of real presentation (intermissions and the like).

GRAPHICS 81%
Good sprites and animation over smooth scrolling backdrops.

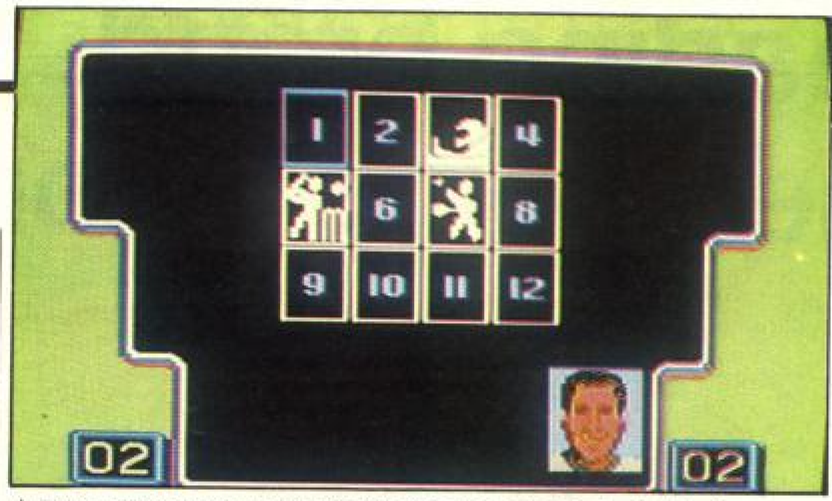
SOUND 69%
A decent title tune, but the in-game sound flounders a bit.

HOOKABILITY 91%
Great fun from the first punch and not just because of the arcade name.

LASTABILITY 86%
Starts off easy but gets hard . . . *very* hard!

OVERALL 87%

A great game and a not half bad conversion job. Ocean/Imagine sure have got their act together!



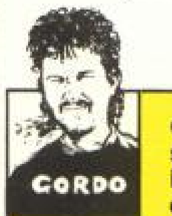
▲ Phew! I thought for a minute that that there pic was Emlyn Hughes!

QS A QUESTION OF SPORT

Elite, C64 £14.99 cassette, £19.99 disk

Cor! You mean *A Question Of Sport*, just like on the telly? Well . . . nearly.

First off you take control of either Ian 'Goldilocks' Botham or Bill 'big ted' Beaumont, pick your team and choose your favourite sport.



Oh well – I was really looking forward to hearing my second favourite theme tune (my favourite's Bullseye**) in 64 form. All this has is some warbly unrecognisable tune. Sulk. The rest of this is OK but, to be honest, it's not that exciting – just a load of interesting multiple choice questions and that's it. No funny graphics or animation, no end-of-game jingle – basically not much. If you're one of them all singing, all jogging trendy sports fans you might still enjoy it – but at £14.99, check it out first.**

Next: the game. There are six rounds: pictureboard (multiple choice questions, rather than photos), mystery personality (questions again), home or away (questions), what happened next? (erm . . . multiple choice questions), quick fire (beat your opponent to answering . . . yup, multiple choice questions) and pictureboard (again).

And that's it.

Remarkable.



It's not really *A Question Of Sport*, is it? More a question of whether a brilliant TV game could ever have been transferred successfully to any computer. If you ask me, Elite would have done better to leave this license alone. Having translated all the exciting visual bits into a lot of questions, all you're left is with a fairly average trivia game. It doesn't help that it hasn't even been jazzed up with a few tunes, a bit of animation or more than basic sound effects. Nothing to shout EXTRAORDINARY about.

amiga

An Amiga version, with enhanced graphics and sound should be out pretty soon (if not now); don't expect much more in the gameplay stakes, though.

update

PRESENTATION 60%
One or two-player game, question blocks and keyboard option, but you can't change from one to two players without reloading.

GRAPHICS 40%
Apart from the celebrity heads, it's simple and uninteresting.

SOUND 39%
Pleasant title tune with one or two in-game 'bong' effects.

HOOKABILITY 60%
It's easy to get into but the lack of variety could put you off.

LASTABILITY 40%
Only for really hardened fans.

OVERALL 50%
A fairly mediocre license that's definitely overpriced.

SUPERSPORTS

Gremlin, C64 £9.99 cassette, £14.99 disk

No more cream cakes for you, chummy, 'cos it's your turn to take part in the international sporting extravaganza of the year.

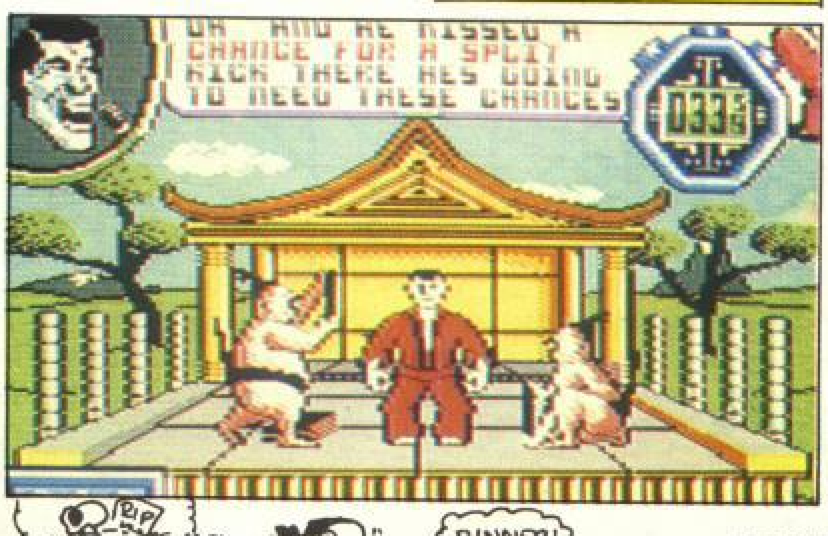
You and up to three mates have been chosen to fly to places as far flung as the Bahamas and Japan to take part in the top notch Crack Shot, Dare Devil Dive, Slate Smash (break as many slates as a couple of Sumo wrestlers hold up to you), Cross Bow and Under Water Assault Course (pick up the gold coins and avoid the jellyfish) events.

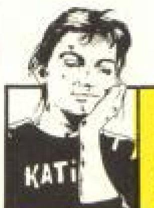
Are you brave enough to take the commentator's stick or will you just run away and hide?



Well this is more fun than a poke in the eye with a pointed stick – a *lot* more fun in fact. The events are all pretty original (with really colourful graphics and some fairly cool 3D) and the commentator makes some very silly sarcastic remarks. I'm not sure that's enough to turn this into the sort of game you'll play again and again, but if you're into sport sims it's definitely worth having a go. Shame about the multiload.

▼ Who's that MC in the corner? That's not Ken D Fish! That's an imposter! KIIILLLL!





This isn't really up to the standard of some of the classic Epyx sports sims, but it isn't half bad either. Some of the events, like the Crack Shot and the Slate Smash (my fave) are really good fun to play, quite unusual and not in the least bit hard to learn. That makes me a bit doubtful about the lastability though – especially with such a mega-boring multiload. On the whole, this is definitely worth giving a very sporting go. It's a pity they couldn't have included a couple of female contenders, though.

PRESENTATION 70%
Up to four players can take part, you can choose which events you want to play, select keyboard and there's a commentator – but the multiload is very tedious.

GRAPHICS 78%
Bold and colourful sprites and backgrounds with a bit of nice 3D.

SOUND 39%
Title tune but extremely sparse in-game effects.

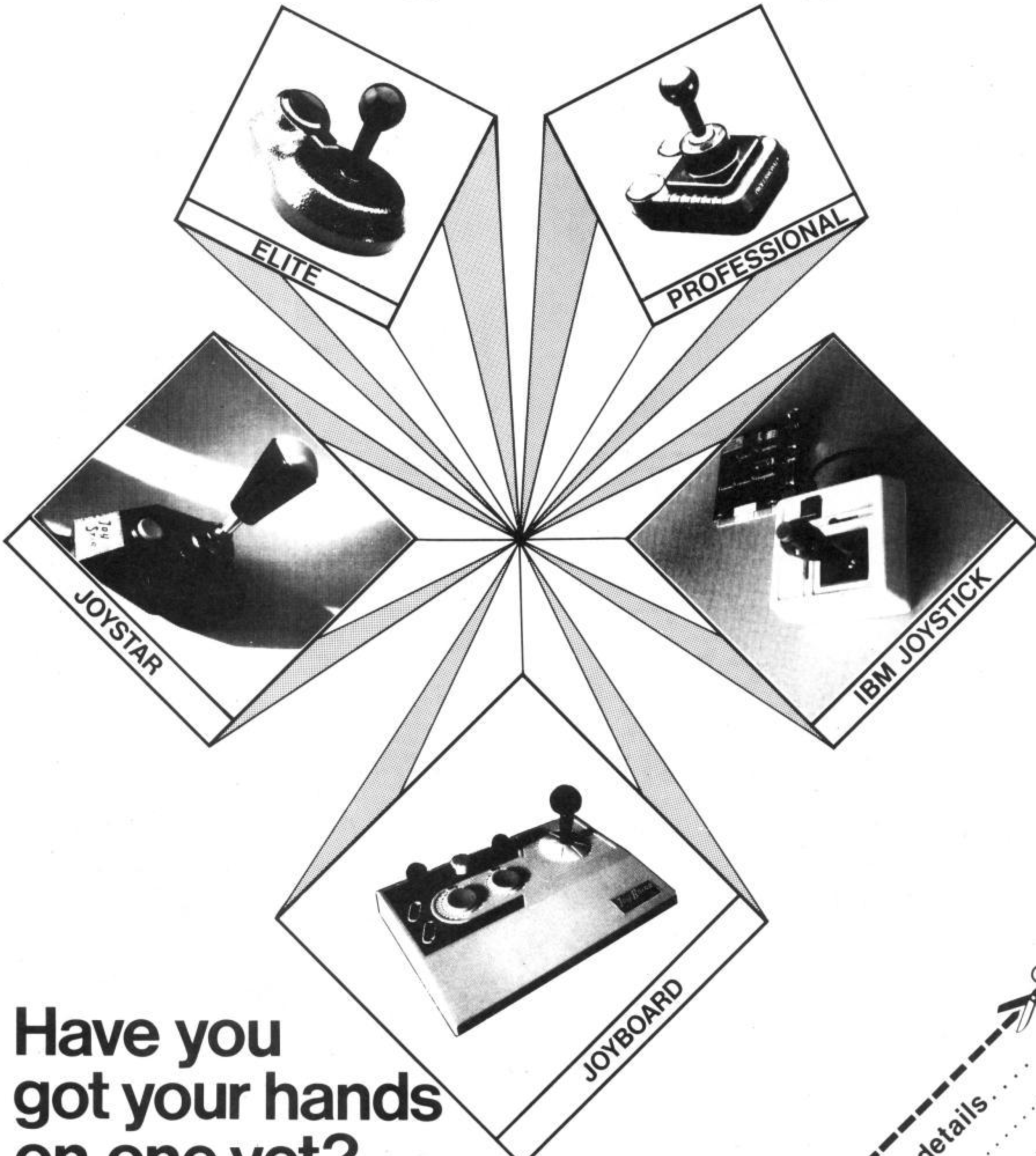
HOOKABILITY 77%
All the events are easy to master and a lot of fun to play at first.

LASTABILITY 59%
The multiload and comparative simplicity of events means that your initial enthusiasm might not last.

OVERALL 76%
A funny and original sports sim which just lacks a bit of extra depth.



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LEAF-BLA

LAST DUEL

US Gold, Amiga £19.99

Far off in space, a long way from our home, exist two planets – Mu and Bacula. For many years they've lived in harmony, the people of both worlds respecting each other. This peace was shattered when a renegade tribe known as the Galden decided to invade . . .

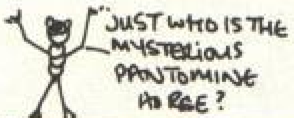
Starting with Bacula, they decimated the Government forces and set up a huge Armada with the intention of invading Mu and taking it over for themselves. A small band of Galden warriors entered the Royal House of Mu and kidnapped Queen Sheeta, holding her hostage until their demands were met.

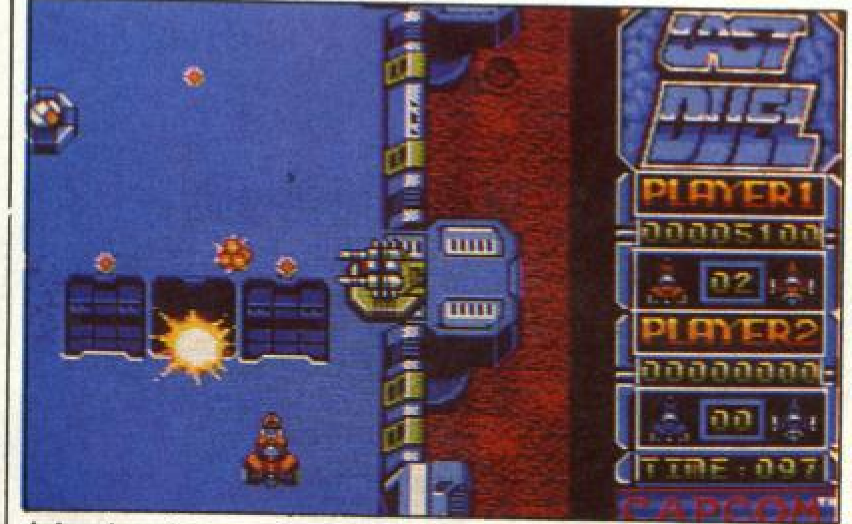
The Royal House of Mu could never be seen to be taken advantage of, so instead of weakening, the ministers signed up their two finest warrior pilots and equipped them with the latest ground/air assault vehicles. They had to fight their way through the six defence zones that the Galden set up on Bacula and rescue their Queen. If they were unsuccessful there would be no hope for the people of Mu and Bacula; this would have to be their *Last Duel*!

Galden weapon and supply pods can be found along the way and shot to reveal add-ons (*P* for power guns, *T* for extra time). So get on with it!



What a great little shoot 'em up this is! The sound and graphics are very well done: brilliant detail with loads of colour and some clear and atmospheric FX and music, even if the tunes are a bit 'poppy' for my tastes! The control is very precise so that it's never the computer's fault that you crashed into the wall – and the extra weapons are very powerful indeed, just as they should be; none of this 'pea shooter Mk II' rubbish! My only qualm is that it's a bit on the easy side – I managed to finish it in an afternoon's frantic blasting – but it's still fun to play even after you've finished it. Fans of the arcade original and shoot 'em up fans in general should check it out; it's not at all bad!





▲ **Arcade perfect or what? Well, not quite – but it's still a brilliant game**



This is really good fun. It's not so much the brill graphics – they're nicely detailed but confined to a pretty small area anyway – or the really good sound; it's just got bags of playability, especially in two-player mode. In fact, the only thing wrong with it is that it's a bit too easy – none of us have ever played the obscure arcade original, so we can't give you a *conversion factor*, but I wouldn't have thought it was this simple . . . Still, if you're an Amiga owner who likes a cross between dodging, racing and blasting, you could do a lot worse. Check it out.

Mickey Mouse™





Gremlin, Amiga £19.99 disk

You know that castle thingy that you see on the titles of *The Wonderful World of Disney*, the one that looks all peaceful an' everyfin'? Well, all is not as it seems. Inside the tower Mickey is fighting for peace, justice and the American way (although what peace and justice have got to do with the American way is beyond me).

Merlin the magician has had his magic wand stolen by the evil Ogre King. The wand has been split into four pieces and given to witches at the top of the towers in the castle. The ogre has put ghosties and ghoulies and things in the towers to try and stop you from getting the wand back together, but you are armed with a squirt gun and a hammer to deal with them. Eventually you must seal up the doors and stop them from emerging. This is done by entering a series of sub-games:

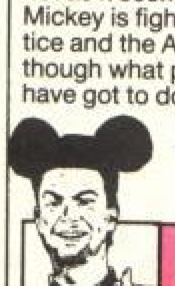
THE PUDDLE MAZE
Mickey must search for wood, hammer and nails to close the door up, whilst dodging or shooting the monsters.

THE BUBBLE MACHINE
Mickey stands on a randomly moving platform patrolled by a ghost. Bubbles rise from beneath and damage the platform if Mickey doesn't hit them with a carefully aimed hammer.

THE PUMP ROOM
This consists of a long pipe with corks at intervals. Mickey must hit the corks to seal the gaps and lower the forcefield guarding the



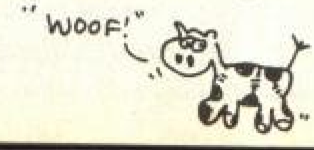
▲ **Gremlin make the Mickey – and dead good it is, too**



In my experience, cartoon character licenses very rarely make good computer games, but I'm glad to say that the most famous of them all has managed to keep his reputation by spawning a cracker of a game. The graphics are nicely detailed and coloured (you could almost believe they're taken directly from the cartoon cels), the ghosty music is more funny than spooky, creating exactly the right atmosphere to suit the already amusing gameplay – smacking teddy bears over the head is great fun (that doesn't sound very nice, does it?). I think I can say that Mickey Mouse **is my favourite cartoon license. Get it!**



I thought at first that Mickey Mouse **wouldn't make a good computer game, as it was quite an awesome undertaking to make the game a worthy addition to the already colourful history of the famous rodent. Fortunately, this Amiga conversion fully captures the fun-loving Disney atmosphere, complete with cute cartoon characters and slapstick action. It's not the most inspiring game of all time, but it sure is a lot of fun – and isn't that what really counts? Well it *is* in my book, so I advise you to get a look at** Mickey Mouse **as soon as you can.**



64

A 64 version is expected anytime – if it's a little harder than the Amiga, it should be something special. Price: £9.99cass, £14.99 disk.

update

PRESENTATION 78%
Good intro pieces and nice in-game control and appearance, but the screen's a bit small . . .

GRAPHICS 90%
Smooth scrolling with well drawn and animated sprites. The inter-level screen's nice too!

SOUND 81%
Good tunes and the excellent spot effects add loads of atmosphere.

HOOKABILITY 86%
Very easy to get into once you start playing.

LASTABILITY 73%
A bit too easy to complete, especially for hardened shoot 'em up fans.

OVERALL 77%

A high quality shoot 'em up at a good price, but with questionable longevity.

demon, all the while dodging nasty monsieters.

THE DRIPPING TAPS
Four taps must be turned off in a particular order via a system of moving platforms. Oh – and there's a nasty ghost as well.

At the top of each tower is a guardian thingie that must be shot in the head to retrieve a piece of wand.

PRESENTATION 89%
Clear appearance, good control and *loads* to do. In a word, *great*.

GRAPHICS 86%
Wonderfully detailed and coloured sprites and backgrounds catch the Disney feel.

SOUND 78%
A brilliant rendition of Fantasia

HOOKABILITY 90%
It's so cute you get drawn in immediately . . .

LASTABILITY 80%
. . . and it stays being cute and playable for a long time.

OVERALL 85%

A cracking cartoon license and a cracking little game in its own right.



▲ **Hmmm . . . Looks like it's time for lunch, doesn't it?** (Amiga)

TECHNO COP

Gremlin, C64 £9.99 cassette, £14.99 disk; Amiga £19.99

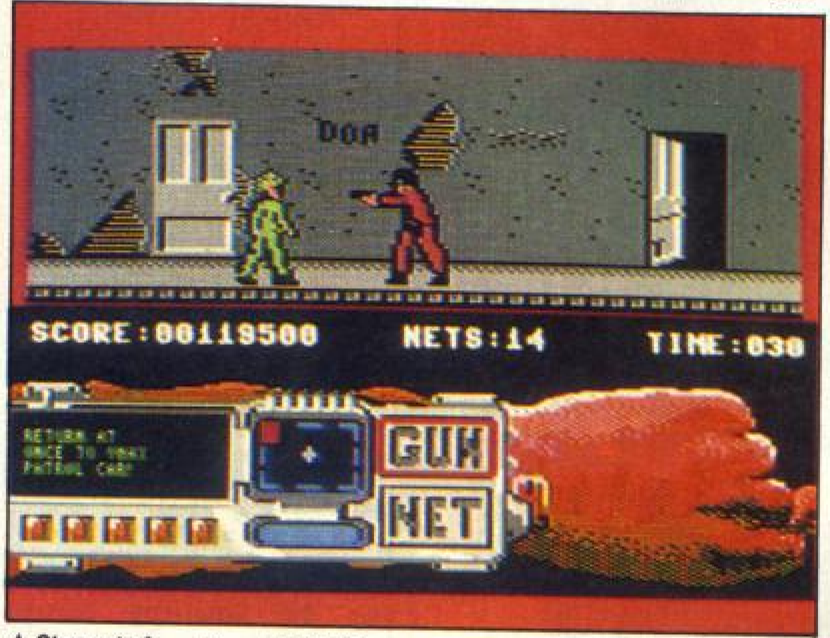
He's all human, just plain gristle, flesh an' blood like you and me, but he acts like a machine. He spends most of his time gunning down people with a machine rifle, turning them into puddles of slimy gunge right in the middle of the floor so you can't get them off with Flash. He's big, he's got lots of guns and scientists have discovered that he has absolutely NO BRAIN. Well, whaddya expect?

So what does this robo-cop . . . whoops (we never said that, no we didn't, nope, never, no siree) . . . I mean, *Technocop* geezer do with his life then?

He goes after known criminals and brings 'em back dead or alive, that's what. Each mission has two parts. First off, you drive to a villain's hideout, picking off enemy vehicles with your side-mounted cannon and generally hogging (oink, oink) the road.

Made it? Right then, off you go along corridors, up and down lifts, looking for the very nasty bloke in question. Shoot or net everybody that gets in your way and when you find the baddy, GET HIM.

And then you do it all again. Woohoo!



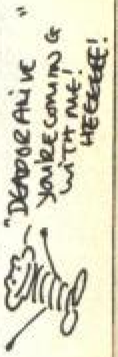
▲ **Stay out of . . . er . . . push me not too far, young sir, or I shall be forced to deal thee a villainous blow** (64)



Well, the story's all about mindless violence and when you get right down to it, that's exactly what this is – mindless. I mean, even an evening with Jim Bowen would be a lot more fun than driving your car down a bit of road, blasting a few people in the head, then driving your car down the road and blasting a few people in the head and then . . . you get the picture? Sounds riveting, dunnit? Oh yeah, and top marks for ingenuity to the clever individual who devised that long-winded multiload inbetween every section on the 64. It's just slightly more boring hanging around for the Amiga to access disk. Ignore the gratuitous picture of the female on the packaging and don't buy this.



It really is coming to something when you use the graphic capabilities of the Amiga to produce something as mindlessly sick as this. It's all good fun, is it? Well, it looks a bit too close to reality to seem like good fun to me – blowing someone into a pile of offal isn't my idea of enjoyment. OK, so you'll probably all go out and have a look at it because it's 'controversial' – well, by all means have a look at both versions, but for god-sake don't buy them, because there's a repetitive, dull and unoriginal game cowering underneath all that sensationalist gore.



64		amiga
15%	**PRESENTATION**	49%
	Nice on-screen presentation can't make up for the incredibly frustrating, long-winded multiload on the 64 or the tedious disk access on the Amiga.	
60%	**GRAPHICS**	51%
	Fairly smooth 3D and average indoor graphics in both versions, though the Amiga has some really unnecessary violent effects.	
47%	**SOUND**	39%
	Title music and very basic in-game effects on the 64. Unremarkable racing and shooting noises but no title music on the Amiga.	
45%	**HOOKABILITY**	53%
	Very poor presentation inhibits much of the enthusiasm you may have at first.	
10%	**LASTABILITY**	40%
	Loading system (especially on the 64) and gameplay are so tedious you'll soon be sitting with your back to the screen.	
17%	**OVERALL**	34%

If this really is the future, be glad you're alive today.



ZZAP! 64 SIZZLER

BATMAN



Ocean, C64 £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk

●The Dark Knight returns . . .

Times have changed. Gotham city is not the place it used to be. The bright city lights don't shine in all the streets, leaving shadows where criminals lurk, led by mentally unbalanced individuals, the dividing line between their realities and their dreams becoming more blurred every day.



Even super-heroes are not immune to the passage of time, as one man discovered . . .

The home of the caped crusader sits just outside the soulless degenerating city. The Batcave is falling into disrepair, but the criminals are still there. Batman must forget the halcion days of his past and deal with two of his arch rivals . . .

THE PENGUIN – "A BIRD IN THE HAND . . ."

Not only are the wheels of justice greased to ensure the safety of the public, but also the hands of those that turn them, meaning the villains get off with little more than a slap on the wrist. The Penguin is a case in point. Having just been released from a very short prison sentence, he sets up an umbrella factory near his mansion. This proves to be a front for his dastardly plans, which consist of taking over the world with an army of robotic penguins. Batman must foil his attempts by following the trail to his factory and confronting the Penguin himself.

▲ **Holy superimposed screen images, Batman! Where's Robin?**

THE JOKER – "A FETE WORSE THAN DEATH"

The dark hero returns to the Batcave to find Robin missing. The only clue is a playing card with cryptic message and a familiar face – the Joker! This time Batman's quest leads him through a strange tunnel system and into an even stranger fairground type area, filled with clowns and jack-in-the-box robots. Can the caped crusader find Robin and avert an explosive catastrophe?

Only you can decide, as you play Batman: in both sections you move him around through a series of cartoon panels, picking up and using objects via the Batbelt utility screen, following the cryptic clues when they appear. If you are unsuccessful your percentage is displayed at the end of the game.





The original Batman character has come a long way since the *BIFF! POW!* days, and I must say that I prefer the latter-day darker atmosphere . . . Special FX have captured this feel exactly with sombre graphics and amazing presentation – all the drawings and designs seem very much in the Brian Bolland (artist of *The Killing Joke*) vein and work beautifully. I can see myself playing Batman **for a long time to come, well until I finish the adventures at any rate! In fact this game pushes forward my vote for Ocean as Software House of the Year! Brilliant stuff!**



I reckon the most outstanding thing about Batman **is the incredible presentation. The way that the screens overlay each other in different shapes and sizes is just the right way to capture the feel of a comic book. Special FX have done the right thing in not trying to produce a 64 emulation of an Amiga game, but designing it to get the best out of the 64's capabilities – and boy have they managed it! Fans of beat 'em ups, arcade adventures and the caped crusader himself have absolutely no excuse for missing this, other than a lobotomy!**

BATMAN – THE STORY SO FAR

***Batman* began his existence within the pages of *Detective Comics* as an ongoing project. Moving on to a higher profile in his own comic and a star-studded TV series and feature film. The super-hero grew up in a big way with the appearance of *The Killing Joke* written by the legendary Alan Moore and illustrated by the phenomenal Brian Bolland. Now about to hit the big screen, *Batman – The Movie* features stars like Michael Keaton, Kim Basinger and the superb Jack Nicholson, and is directed by *Beetlejuice* man Tim Burton.**



All the Batman stories I've ever seen have consisted of about 50% detective work and 50% fighting. Ocean's license has taken this idea and worked it into a very playable arcade adventure. The arcade beat 'em up sections are frantic and exciting and the adventure overtones take a lot of concentration, without being too difficult, especially if you follow the clues (shh, quiet!). In all, another excellent license from them 'oh so wundy' people at Ocean that keeps all the atmosphere of the Dark Knight himself. Buy it NOW!

amiga

Expect the Amiga version – price £24.95 – to be released any day now; same game, diff graffs.

update

PRESENTATION 97%
Wonderful windowing system gives the feeling of being involved in a comic.

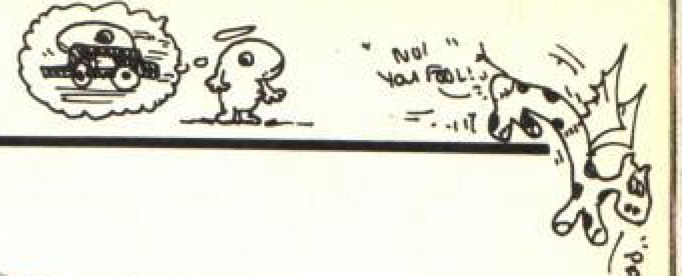
GRAPHICS 90%
Sombre backdrops and very Brian Bolland sprites evoke *just* the right atmosphere.

SOUND 87%
Great reworking of the Batman theme and some very good effects.

HOOKABILITY 94%
The clues lead you gently in at first . . .

LASTABILITY 92%
. . . but the sheer addictiveness of two separate games keeps you playing long after.

OVERALL 92%
An amazing arcade adventure and another feather for the already crowded Ocean hat.



Wec Le Mans

Imagine, C64 £9.95 cassette, £14.95 disk

And now over to Murray Walker at the Wec Le Mans 24-hour race . . .

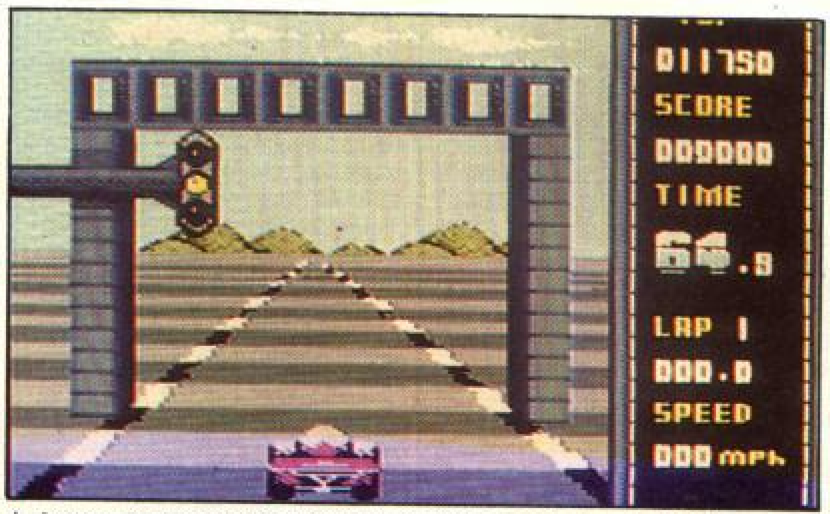
'And there they go . . . and it's Nigel Mansell in the lead . . . no, Nigel's just retired . . . no, no that's not Nigel it's . . . erm . . . Nelson Piquet in the red Williams Honda. Yes, Nelson Piquet in the red Williams has taken the lead. Oh no, what a disaster, it looks like just when he was moving over to take the lead, Nelson Piquet has skidded off the track . . . '

If you think Murray Walker is to racing what turkeys are to Christmas, chances are you'll know all about the gruelling endurance demanded in a 24-hour race.

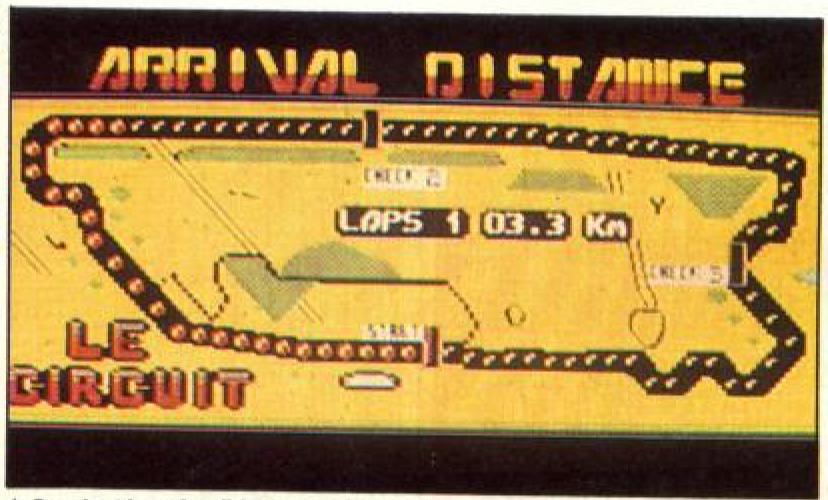
This version of the biggy day and night experience has you taking on four laps, each with three checkpoints. You've got to reach each checkpoint within a given time limit or you're out of the race. You've got a couple of gears (don't change up until you're going 90 at least), top speed of 224 mph – and the rest is up to you.

Oh yeah – get too close to the edge and you slow down. Get too close to the other guys and you're in for a crash (bang, wallop) and a big loss of time.

Pity Murray couldn't make it. But then you can't hurry a Murray, can you? *(That's CRAP, Kati – Ed).*



▲ **Are you ready to rock and roll? Grip that wheel and get ready to GO!**



▲ **So – just how far did you get, Cameron?**



Nobody was expecting a pixel perfect conversion, but the 3D on this doesn't even come up the standard of a budget game. The lurching track movement is bug-ridden from beginning to end – at top speed it virtually stops! – and there are sub-standard glitches practically everywhere. Worse still, the other cars make it just too difficult to get round the track (if you're still bothered) 'cos the minute you come anywhere near them, they home in and make you crash. If you're really in love with the coin-op, keep on playing that – this isn't anything like it.



I suppose it had to happen. After Batman **and** Robocop **there just had to be a joker in Ocean's pack. Well, boys and girls, this is it. If you were expecting 3D up to the standard of** Pitstop II **or** Buggy Boy **forget it. Track movement speeds up and slows down all over the shop and the perspective bars are so glitchy you feel like you're going cross-eyed. The bare bones of the gameplay aren't too bad but with an on-screen table that doesn't even tell you what gear you're in, and cars that you can drive through, the whole thing could do with some serious debugging. If I'd spent ten quid on this, I'd be hang-dog disappointed.**

conversion 38 factor

amiga

An Amiga version, hopefully sporting some much better graphics (please), is under development and should be coming out later on this year. It'll put you back £24.95

update

PRESENTATION 38%
Not very helpful – no highscore table and nothing on screen to tell you what gear you're in.

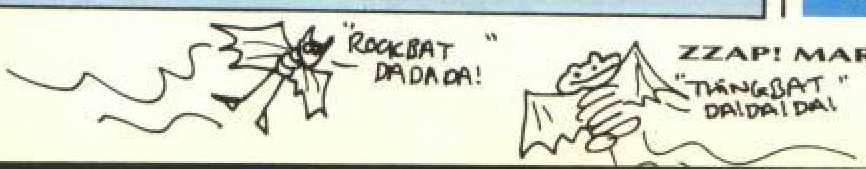
GRAPHICS 30%
Appallingly glitchy 3D track movement and buggy sprites. 3D backgrounds are good though.

SOUND 52%
Title tune and usual *broom, broom* effects.

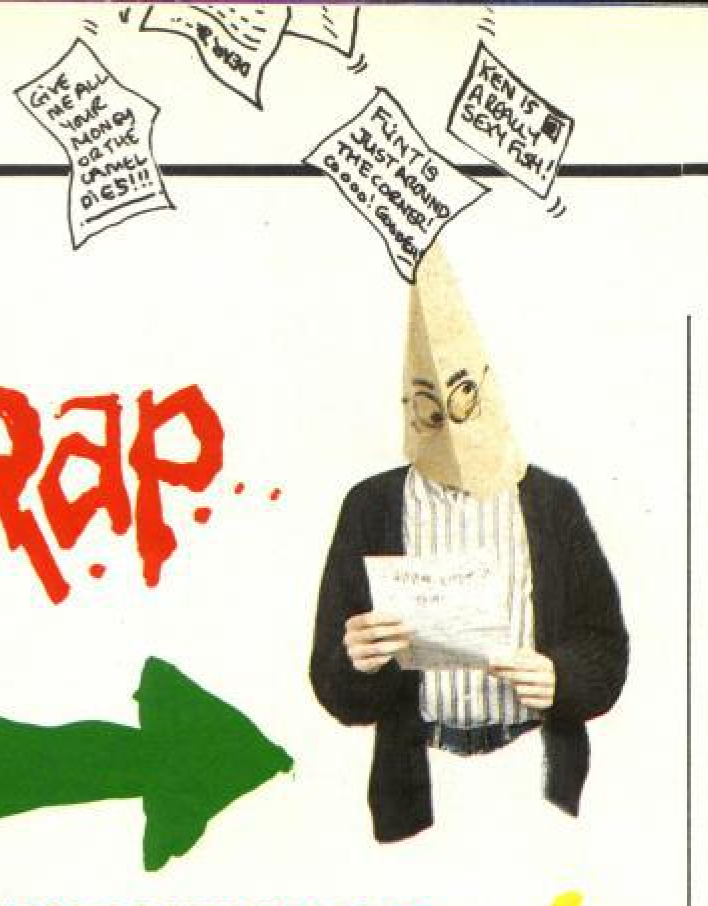
HOOKABILITY 50%
Even the fact that it's *Wec Le Mans* can't stop the 3D from putting you off.

LASTABILITY 27%
Unless you've got no other games in your collection, you won't keep coming back to this.

OVERALL 40%
A very disappointing conversion from a software house with far higher standards.







Yaaaay! At long last we've got a Letter of the Month! I've been asking for *different* views on computer issues, and I think this one genuinely sheds a new light on attempts to stop piracy. Apart from that, we've received another sackful of scribblings from banana-lovers, a RASH letter and several cartoons – all from certifiable loonies. You've probably also noticed (unless you've got a bucket on your head) that I've revealed my identity to the world – well, almost. It's as good as *you'll* get, for now.

YO HO HO PREVENTION KIT

Dear Lloyd,
I am pleased to see that shops and firms all over the place have started to take some measures against piracy, in that they are at last re-releasing older games. Although this may be done for competitive reasons it has many benefits for the industry as a whole. Since many older games are budget price now, it's possible to fill the gaps in your games collection without resorting to piracy!

Many new games are being reduced in price now – sometimes because they are generally considered to be 'not so good', and sometimes because of competition from neighbouring shops. Whatever the reasons, these measures can only reduce the amount of piracy. The 'I can't afford them argument' is obviously weakened, too.

Why didn't you print the Christmas Special sorta nearer Christmas? Do you lose that many sales by not publishing in November?
Stephen Fenton, Staffordshire.

I agree with your points about rereleases, and they do prevent piracy in some small way, but some pirates copy for the sake of it anyway – a kind of 'look at me, I've got a big d' attitude. An interesting alternative view to rereleased games is given below, and replies from pirates will be welcomed for a future Rrap!***

The Christmas Issue came out in November because of advertising, which allowed us to have so many pages! It'll probably be the same next year, too . . .
LM

WILL EVERYBODY JUST SHUT THE F*** UP!!!

Dear Lloyd,
I am in great despair so I thought I must put pen to paper and write to you. I am absolutely fed up with little slimy worms complaining at every little detail they can get their fat gobs round. Why don't they just shut their big traps and take up bomb disposal as a hobby?

You can't print one word without some fat toad putting pen to paper and writing a lengthy letter complaining about conversions, films tie-ins or the price of software. If they want something to complain about I suggest that you either show them in the direction of a mirror or show them to my house so I can tell them where to go. They make me sick.
Robert Barington, Staffs.

WILL EVERYBODY JUST SHUT THE F*** UP 2!!!

Dear Lloyd,
Can all people who only write slimey letters ('Oh, you're so brill and I don't know what to write') and/or stupid things about slobber or Bananas please stop sending 'em in to ZZAP!! If you don't have anything interesting to write, then please don't! So, 'slobber', 'shucks', 'Hooray' Ms Rocky, 'Lick boots' Leach and others, stop it! It's a computer mag, y'know.
Rebb, Holland.

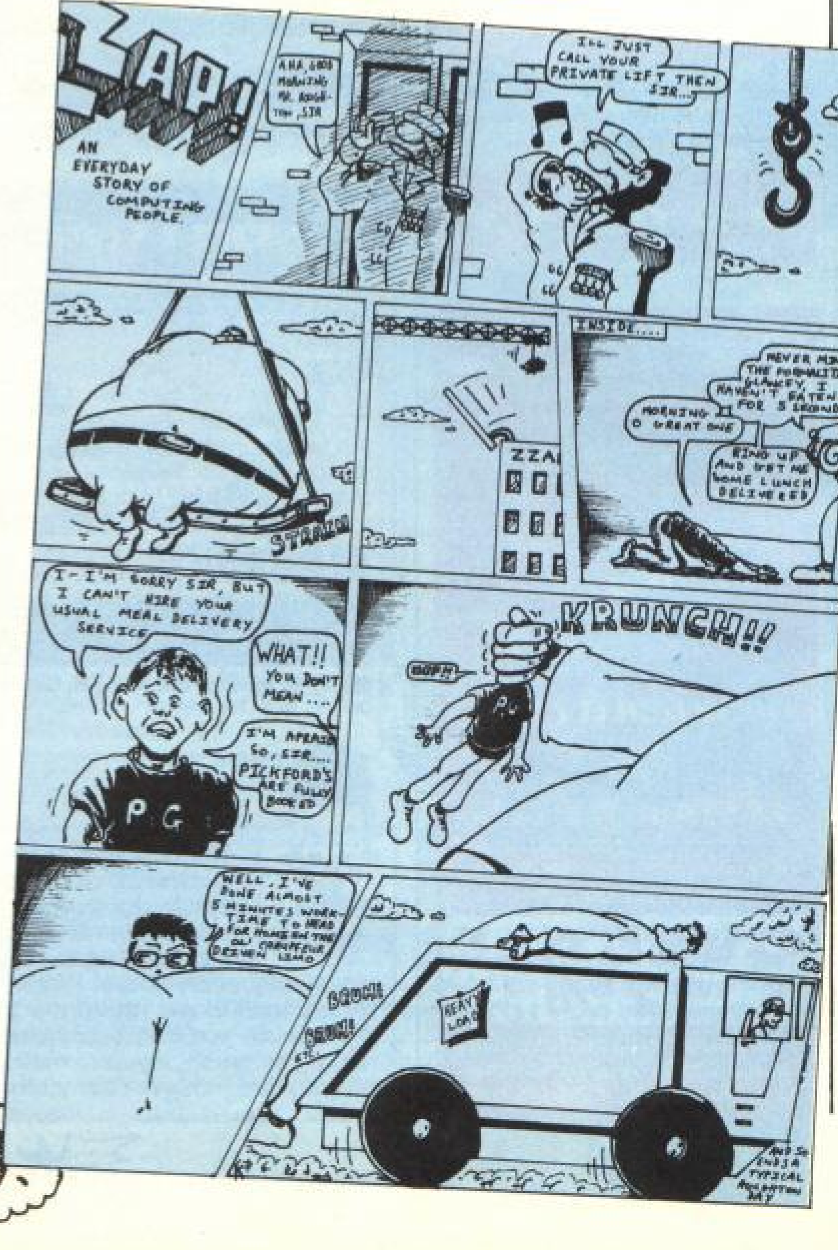
Anybody want to write in and complain about these letters?
LM

THE BUDGET BANANA BOAT

Dear Lloyd,
I would like to congratulate the budget companies for doing a top rate job. The majority of the budget releases nowadays were once selling for £9.95 or more. A rip off or what? As many games are being bought by the budget companies, all I ever buy now are budget titles. This may seem a bit strange, but what is the point of buying a £10 game when in a few months it will sell for just £2 or £3? I hope that there will be many more quality re-releases, but does all this mean that the 64 software market is in steep decline and will soon only be supported by the odd few companies?
S N Hardy, Sheffield

The 64 market is as strong as it ever was, and will continue that way as long as there are loads of 64s around. Obviously, with the rise in popularity of budget games, the switch from full price to pocket money price is much quicker – often only a few months. As you say, it can only be good for the buyer, but I feel sorry for those people who buy the full-price product only to find it seven quid cheaper within 6 months . . .

Meanwhile, there are a whole load of brilliant full-price products around that are unlikely to be converted to budget for a couple of years – and they're well worth buying.
LM







NO

Dear Lloyd,
Do you know what I have gone an' done? Oh, my god . . . it's just so . . . well, you know that competition that was in the Christmas ZZAP! that you had to draw a picture to win a Better Dead Than Alien' T-Shirt? Well, I misunderstood it and went and drew the picture of what clothes someone who drives big spaceships and blows Aliens heads off should wear!!
It took me absolutely ages, so as some consolation could you print it?
Daniel Egerton Cumbria.

No.
LM

SLOBBER II

Dear Lloyd,
SLOBBER II: the awakening.
Arthur Jones, Lincolnshire.

Bleuch II: the reply.
LM

THE BITTER END

Dear Lloyd,
I have a question for many programmers. Why don't they make decent ending screens in arcade adventures?

Programmers put so much time and effort into producing fine program with fantastic graphics, yet when it comes to the screen that you would expect a treat for completing the game, it is often a big let-down.

Let me give you a couple of examples of what I am talking about. *Ghosts 'n' Goblins* – an excellent game with brilliant graphics – yet the ending screen is a pathetic, colourless, pint-sized knight running across the screen towards a similar looking maiden.

Another example is *The Last Ninja*. This game consists of six difficult but compelling levels of brilliant graphic animation, stunning backdrops and fine gameplay. It is almost impossible to complete, (I couldn't have done it without your map!) yet if you do manage to complete the game after countless hours of trying, what do you get for a reward? A black screen with the words 'THE QUEST CONTINUES' or something stupid like that. I saw this pitiful ending screen, switched the computer off and thought 'What a waste of time'.

I suppose that in reply you will say that the pleasure should be the satisfaction of completing the game, and this is true, but I believe that if there were more ending screens such as *Impossible Mission*'s, then the game would sooner entice the player to have another go just to see that classic ending screen again.
Bret Goborit, Adelaide, Australia.

I entirely agree with you. Some of the pleasure is in working your way through the game – but much more could be made of an ending screen – even if the programmers had to go to the extent of adding an extra short load to make it something really special.
LM

A R.A.S.H. LETTER

Dear Lloyd,
Our society would not normally write to you, but under the circumstances we must protest at the cruel treatment of your editor.

Mr Gordon Houghton (referred to by you and the other contributors as 'ZZAP!'s answer to the EEC Butter Mountain') has suffered enough. I am sure that Mr Houghton cannot be that rotund. One of our members recalls seeing him at the PC Show at Earls Court in September and I am told that there was still room to walk around on your stand. Surely if he was the size you claim people wouldn't have been able to go about their business even if it was Newsfield's largest stand ever at the show. Aren't you blowing everything a tad (or even a little bit) out of proportion? I am sure the poor man tortures himself because of your cruel comments. They may induce anorexic or suicidal tendencies . . . It would be simpler if you curtailed these silly antics immediately.

Our member's advice to Mr Houghton is to ignore these sick jibes. The world would be a very boring place if everyone looked the same.

We, that is myself and our member, also advise Mr Houghton to go out and have a good meal – there must be a decent restaurant in Ludlow and I'm sure they would be happy to serve up that goldfish who writes the winner's pages (Is his name really Ken?) with a portion of chips.

Our member expects little better from your publication anyway. It seems that the ZZAP! team hate food. Why the sudden cruelty to bananas? They really just want a quiet life and want to be eaten. I don't think they enjoy the excessive media exposure you have given them. And what about the incident with the NTCLF (Nuneton Tea Cup Liberation Front) who promised to set all tea cups free? That may have been many moons ago in ZZAP! but the tea cups are still waiting; they will never forget. Why was this incident hushed up? Have you, Mr Mangram, got something to hide? Where have all the tea cups gone?
William Callaghan, Secretary, R.A.S.H. (now defunct)

Our Fat Git Editor thanks you for all your support, Bill, but he's also announced that he's going on a diet. We've decided therefore that the person who sends in the best diet will receive a £10 software voucher: mark your envelope 'Hack Thick Pieces of Flab Off the Fat Man' and send it to the usual address. Negotiations with the NTCLF and those who would have tea cups enslaved are very delicate at the moment, so we're remaining tight-lipped.

And, by the way, all the bananas we know are ecstatic about their new-found media exposure.
LM

And so, as the sun sets slowly in the er . . . west . . . we come to the end of another . . . er . . . Rrap. I'll try and squeeze more pages out of the Fat Man next month – until then, carry on sending those crusty epistles to the usual address: **Lloyd Mangram, ZZAP! Rrap, PO Box 10, LUDLOW, Shropshire, SY8 1DB.** Remember – eat more chocolate, be nice to people and avoid dark alleyways and fishy smells: you won't go far wrong. Baaaaaa.

GO ABSOLUTELY BLEEDIN' CRAZY!!



and win this fab remote control buggy-thingy

20 copies of *Crazy Cars* up for grabs, too! Woooaaaah!



Sitting at home bored of staring at the wall? Wouldn't you rather be doing something *exciting*? Something a little more *adventuwous*? Something wisibly wonderful and wumbunctious?

Well, now you can, sweeties, because here at ZZAP! Towers we've got one of them remote control buggies (like wot you can see in the pic) that go *zooooooom* and *whiiiiizzzzz* and *KER-SMASH!!!*. But only if you're one of those silly types that play with it *in*side the house.

If you go *out*side and find a bit of spare ground (it can be a garden, a street, or the back of a hippo), you'll discover just how pleasurable and excitatious having your own buggy-thingy can be. Go *oooh!* as it rips away into the distance (max speed 25km/h); go *aaah!* as it spins around and races back, engaging its 4WD Turbo boost; go *nygaah waaagh hiyaaa!* if you're a fan of Kati Hamza; go away if you don't want to enter this competition.

So, wot's this gadgi car got, then? Here's just a few of the things to delectate and eructate your sensory organs:

- Double wishbone front suspension
- Full time 4WD with high-grip tyres
- Polycarbonate impact bumper
- Swing rear axle suspension
- Twin motor and air duct
- Genuine turbo performance for super high-speed racing

Not only will the winner get this luvly luvly piece of . . . er . . . car; BUT ALSO *(!!!)* they'll get a free copy of *Crazy Cars* as well. Wooooh! 20 equally turbo-charged reader types will get copies of the game as runners up.

So, ze qvestion iss, vot haf you to do to vin, ja? Vell . . . er . . . Well, it's like this. We want you to tell us who you think is the craziest member of the ZZAP! team, and why – buuuuut *in no more than 20 words!*. Right – that's it. Fill in the form and send it off to us before March 14th. Easy peasy lemon squeazy, as Steve Jarratt used to say.





Name ....

Address ....

....

....

Postcode ....

The craziest member of the ZZAP! team is: ....

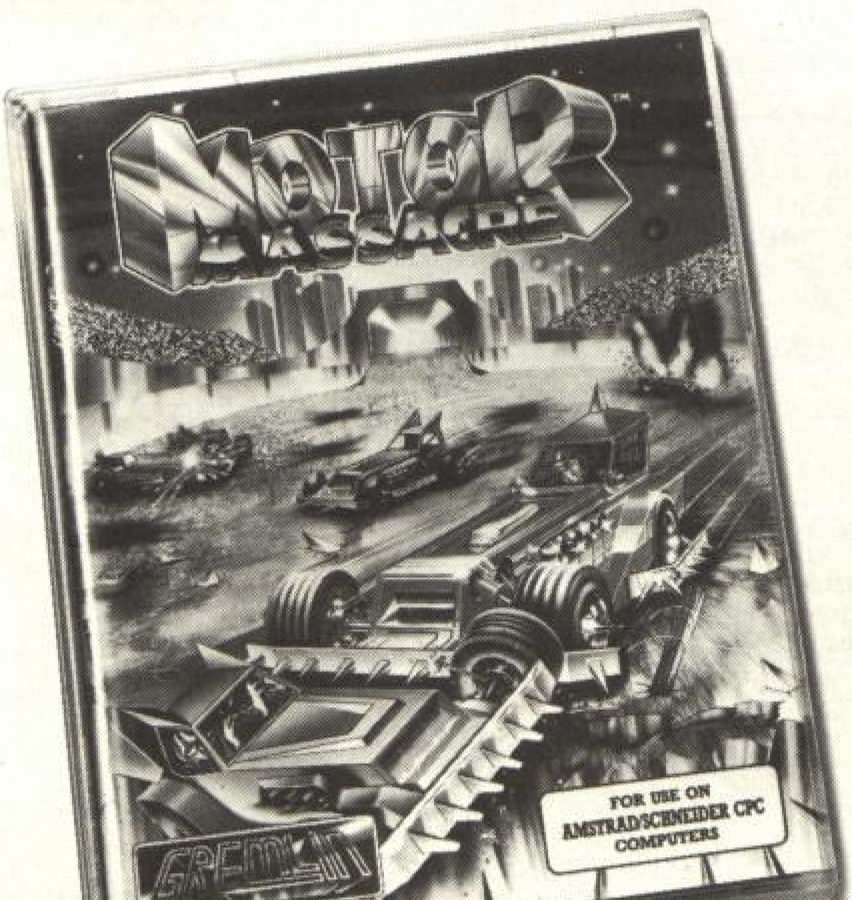
Because ....

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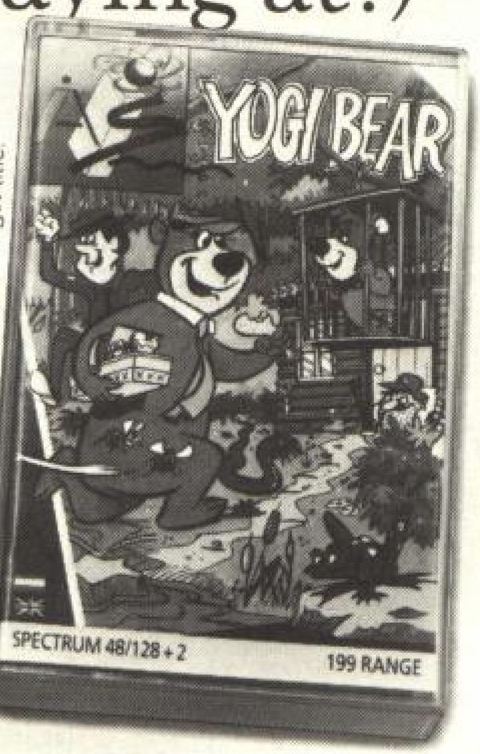
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Free Computer Games.

(What are Boots playing at?)



Example of free budget title.



Your mission > Buy any Spectrum, Commodore or Amstrad game for £7.95 or more.

Your prize > A budget game, worth up to £2.99, completely free. (To be chosen from any title in stock.) To start > enter Boots.

A better buy at Boots

SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY IN LARGER STORES ONLY. OFFER RUNS FROM FEBRUARY 13–MARCH 4 1989



Another Challenge-less issue this month, as we await worthy opponents for the immense editor. Hurry up with those *Speedball* and *Emlyn Hughes* entries so that we can crush him together! Meanwhile, the scores bin is a bit empty at the moment – come on, you piffling Earth people, it's well into the new year and you should be sending in the high scores you must have achieved on the games you all got for Christmas. Unless this 'Santa Claus' character didn't bother with you this year . . . har, har!

720° (US Gold)
793,880 Spiro Harvey, Wellington, New Zealand
646,050 Philip Davies, Pencoed, Mid Glam
550,490 Daniel Briggs, Torrensville, S Australia

ALIEN SYNDROME (Ace)
223,610 D Emmins, Stratford, London E15
148,200 John Flower, Victoria, Australia
134,300 Mike Thomas, Caerphilly, Mid Glam

ARKANOID II – REVENGE OF DOH (Imagine)
437,140 Keith David Boones Shrewsbury, Salop
411,690 Scorrano Hassime, Orbe, Switzerland
276,250 Mark Smith, Broxbourne, Herts

ARMALYTE (Thalamus)
13,621,700 Colin Refern, Rochdale, Lancs
7,984,700 Marc Hodge, Selby, N Yorks
5,622,000 Greame Agnew, Kilbarchan, Scotland

BARBARIAN (Palace)
518,900 Spiro Harvey, Wellington, New Zealand
452,200 Martin Kelsey, Dore, Sheffield
356,400 Adrian Davies, Burntwood, W Mids

BARBARIAN II (Palace)
289,000 John Turkington, Carrickfergus, N Ireland
251,747 Matthew Phypers, Denby Village, Derby
246,060 Alex Shaw, Worcester, Worcs

BATTLE VALLEY (Rack-It)
1,990,775 Japmaster, Ettingshall Park, Wolverhampton
1,986,700 Marc Spence, Leeds, W Yorks
1,949,000 Darren Brookes, Long Eaton, Notts

BEAT IT (Mastertronic)
1,350,070 Peter Samaon, Victoria, Australia
813,510 Dean James, W Bromwich, W Mids
792,665 Alan Smith, Peckham, London

BIONIC COMMANDO (Go)
1,352,820 Marc Spence, Leeds, W yorks
1,184,760 Wayne Fowler, Basildon, Essex
1,120,420 James Kent, Ware, Herts

BUBBLE BOBBLE (Firebird)
8,692,430 Richard Pembridge, Wirral, Merseyside
8,215,420 Simon Bettison, Sheffield, S Yorks
8,120,740 Heather Bettison, Sheffield, S Yorks

BUGGY BOY (Elite)
149,640 Robert Pascoe, Truro, Cornwall
125,670 Daniel Moxey, Lowestoft, Suffolk
124,690 Jonothan Dood, Parklands, Northampton

COMBAT SCHOOL (Ocean)
447,920 Suhaib Kiani, Rawalpind, Pakistan
375,430 Mark Fontana, Burton-on-Trent, Staffs
325,980 Mark (The Carcus), Swindon, Wilts

COSMIC CAUSEWAY (Gremlin Graphics)
994,123 Ben Read, Penzance, Cornwall
887,460 Gavan Flower, Werribee, Australia
885,307 Antony Grasiewicz, Peterborough, Cambs

CYBERNOID (Hewson)
138,875 Wayne Fowler, Basildon, Essex
124,800 Babak Fakhamzadeh, Delft, Holland
97,365 Andreas Panopoulos, Athens, Greece

DARK SIDE (Incentive)
6,130,726 Kuddly Bix, York, N Yorks
3,608,450 Justin Moy, Crawley, Sussex
3,172,550 Jason Goodchild, Tattershall, Lincs

DRILLER (Incentive)
3,498,450 Ged Keaveney, Huddersfield, W Yorks
3,226,070 Kudly Bix, York, N Yorks
2,063,760 Daniel Fisher, Chesterfield, Derbys

GREAT GIANA SISTERS (Go/Rainbow Arts)
94,710 Richard Ramsey, Gilmerton, Edinburgh
86,775 Steven Packer, Chelmsford, Essex
84,525 Ged Keaveney, Huddersfield, W Yorks

GRYZOR (Ocean)
2,802,200 Richard Lunn, Leeds, W Yorks
1,253,300 Japmaster, Ettingshall Park, Wolverhampton
892,700 David Pocock, S Coydon, Surrey

GUNSHIP (Microprose)
750,026 D Mothersole, Bishop's Stortford, Lancs
327,670 Paul Koster, Olpe, Germany
325,390 Matt Heaton, Berkhamstead, Herts

HAWKEYE (Thalamus)
2,695,550 Zap Treeby, Brixham, Devon
2,520,800 Jonathan Green, Peterborough, Cambs
2,456,250 Casey Gallacher, Calcot, Reading

HUNTER'S MOON (Thalamus)
618,450 Lee Laurenson, Lerwick, Shetland
472,150 Zsuzui Bettison, Sutton-in-Ashfield, Notts
227,375 Matthew Upton, Elmley Castle, Worcs.

IKARI WARRIORS (Elite)
381,700 Neil Head, Stourbridge, W Mids
379,400 Peter Stevens, Yoevil, Somerset
356,100 Nick Frere, Doncaster, S Yorks

IMPOSSIBLE MISSION II (US Gold)
109,700 Neil Head, Stourbridge, W Mids
108,600 Peter Srodecki, Dunstable, Beds
104,000 Lee Smith, Southampton, Hampshire

INTERNATIONAL KARATE + (System 3)
543,300 John Farrow, Barrowford, Lancs
511,900 Katamati, Hounslow, Middx
497,700 Gareth Pollitt, Thirsk, N Yorks

IO (Rainbird)
1,200,170 Jeremy Daalder, Adelaide, S Australia
609,570 Bruni Francesco Tagliamento, Italy
496,290 Nick Kennedy, Gunnislake, Cornwall

LAST NINJA 2 (System 3)
397,460 Louis Polycarpou, Edgeware, Middx
294,830 R Sporkeslade, Wassenaar, Holland
289,950 Stuart Taylor, Southbourne, Bournemouth

MEGA APOCALYPSE (Martech)
211,730 Peter Clarke, Hartlepool, Cleveland
204,340 Richard Ramsey, Gilmerton, Edinbugh
197,260 Liam Dysrant, Harrington Square, London NW1

MORPHEUS (Rainbird)
1,321,485 Richard Pembridge, Wirral, Merseyside
1,266,774 Zap Treeby, Brixham, Devon
1,224,980 Gunars Berzins, Yagoona, Sydney

NEBULUS (Hewson)
201,240 Matthew Moriarty, Hurst Green, E Sussex
166,370 Edward JD Jackson, Leeds, W Yorks
154,400 Michael Garnett, Hatfield, Herts

OPERATION WOLF (Ocean)
188,500 Aidan Stevens, Witham, Essex
172,000 Graeme Agnew, Kilbarchan, Scotland
170,500 Louis Polycarpou, Edgeware, Middx

OUT RUN (US Gold)
92,318,105 Martin Lear, Huddersfield, W Yorks
92,128,800 Mark Crossthwaite, Stockport, Cheshire
87,720,606 Julian Hare, Hampton, Middx

PAC-LAND (Quicksilva)
891,410 I Strong, Twickenham
614,990 Jake E, West Bromwich, West Mids
504,650 Graham Stevens, Tattersall, Lincs

PLATOON (Ocean)
1,162,100 Liam Dysrant, Harrington Square, London NW1
1,060,800 David Pocock, S Croydon, Surrey
1,010,650 Jeremy Webb, Blandford, Dorset

PROHIBITION (Infogrames)
$30,260 Robert Pascoe, Truro, Cornwall
$26,260 Stuart Wannop, Accrington, Lancs
$22,155 Sebastian Stephen, Victoria, Australia

PROJECT STEALTH FIGHTER (Microprose)
65,040 AD Rogers, Exeter, Devon
64,500 JK Hugget, Huddersfield, W Yorks
37,140 JA Moore, Margaret River, W Australia

RE-BOUNDER (Gremlin Graphics)
11,250,073 Craig Knight, Keyworth, Notts
3,486,190 Webby, Chorley, Lancs
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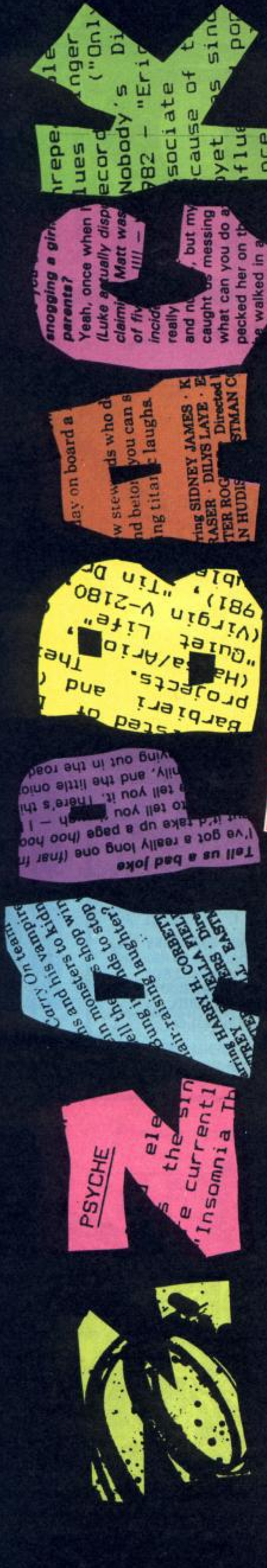
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Brrr! Issue 22 saw 70 games arrive for review, but only 44 could be covered in the time and space available. Some things never change. Enough of this idle banter – the dynamic duo (ha ha) responsible for looking over their shoulders at this basket of bouncing lovelies are Maff 'I don't wear a cap anymore' Evans and Gordon 'Diet Man' Houghton.

GAMES ZZAPBACKED

- GAUNTLET
- PARK PATROL
- THEY STOLE A MILLION



PRESENTATION 82%

GRAPHICS 90%

SOUND 31%

HOOKABILITY 95%

LASTABILITY 92%

VALUE 90%

OVERALL 93%

GAUNTLET
US Gold

The long awaited axe 'n' zap 'em up was received with great cries of 'ooh' and 'aah' in the windswept Towers. Funky vibe-man Jazza Razza called it 'unbelievable' and 'a truly brilliant program that shouldn't be missed at any cost'. Aciiieeeed Ricky Eddy wasn't as 'awestruck' as he expected to be, and hippy shakes man Gary Penn expressed many a word, one of which was 'competent'. Oh well.

I remember my version of this being plagued by bugs – I couldn't get it to load for *ages*. When I did, well, it was *all right* without being as good as the reviewers had made out. The two player game was the best – but what happened to being able to push each other around? It all got a bit boring too quickly.
GH

If awards were available for Most Over-Rated Game, then this would have to appear high on the list. The graphics are atrocious, the sound weak and the whole game dull. I felt conned by *Gauntlet*, not to say disappointed.
ME

(Gordon) The sound was about right, but the rest should come down 10% or so. It's definitely worth compilation and budget value, though.

(Maff) Everything *way* down to the low 50s.

PRESENTATION 97%

GRAPHICS 94%

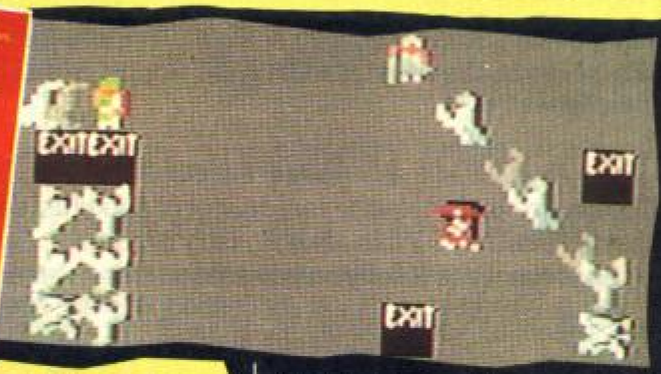
SOUND 96%

HOOKABILITY 95%

LASTABILITY 90%

VALUE 99%

OVERALL 94%



PARK PATROL
Firebird/Activision

Firebird's re-release of ye olde Activision classic caused quite a stir in the ZZAP! cauldron; stamping on turtles and picking up rubbish proved to be dead good.

Thinking the graphics were fabulous, Jaz announced 'the graphics are fabulous'; Gaz 'The Man' thought it 'worth anybody's time and money'; and Paul 'Iron Head' Sumner pronounced it 'one of the best VFM budget releases'.

Yeah! Great fun! I only ever played it on re-release but, along with *Thrust*, this is one of my all-time budget faves. It's got everything you could want: addictive action, variable difficulty levels and silly music. One to grab if you can find it.
GH

I first played this when it was only available as an import and thoroughly enjoyed it, so when it came out a budget release I was most pleased. Proof of the idea that cheap games need not look cheap. Buy it if you haven't got it.
ME

(Gordon) Apart from a couple of marks down on sound, these marks are fine by me, mister!

(Maff) I'd go along with that.

THEY STOLE A MILLION
39 Steps/Ariolasoft

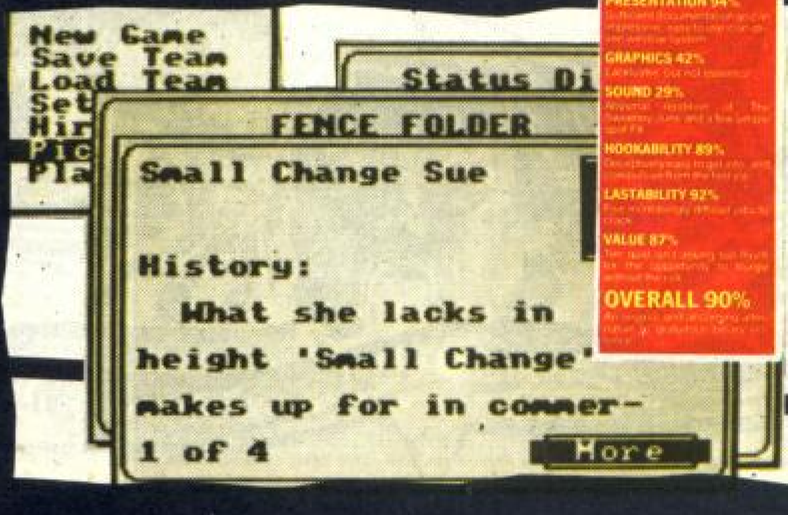
Who are 39 Steps? Where are they now? Ah, the passing of time . . . Time was also important in this little cracker, which involved plotting a bank raid using various skilled members of a selectable team. Sounds boring? Think again: Jules revelled in the 'great game beneath the seedy exterior' and Paul 'Killer' Sumner thought it 'surprisingly enjoyable'. Topping the lot was Gary P's comment: 'one of the most original, atmospheric and compulsive games ever to appear on the 64'. Praise indeedy-doody.

As the review says, this is deceptively simple to get into; but once you're engrossed, the strategy involved is compelling. Unfortunately, I soon got bored of planning (and rewinding the cassette) only to find I'd got something slightly wrong . . . Not an essential, but worth looking out for.
GH

This is definitely an *alternative* program. I wouldn't enthuse as much as Gary Penn did, but its originality made it very appealing. A good alternative to licences and run-of-the-mill tie-ins, but a pity about the sound.
ME

(Gordon) Graphics and sound OK, the rest down by 10% or so. It doesn't have that addictive edge.

(Maff) The marks are fine by me, fat boy.



PRESENTATION 94%

GRAPHICS 42%

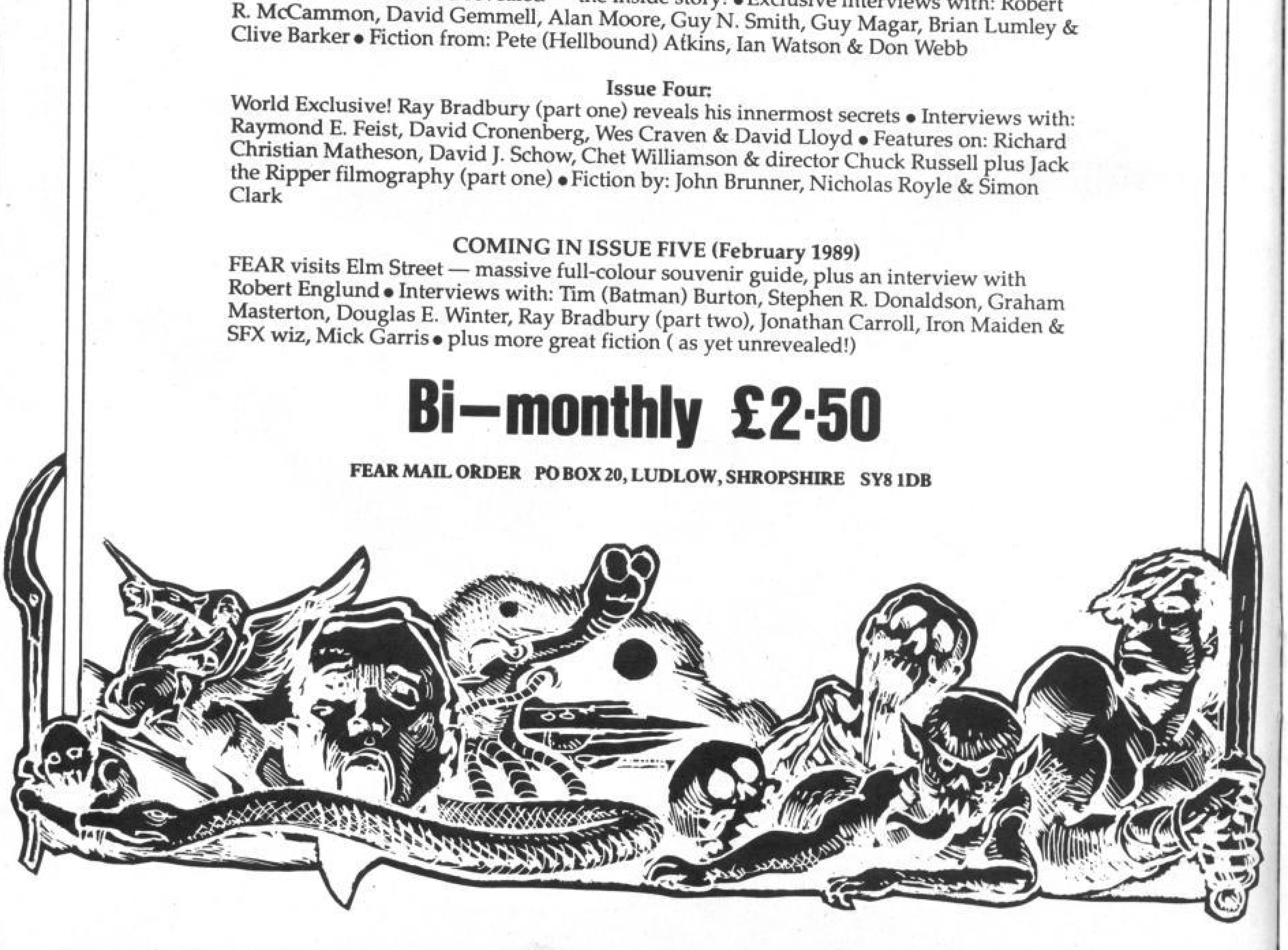
SOUND 29%

HOOKABILITY 89%

LASTABILITY 92%

VALUE 87%

OVERALL 90%





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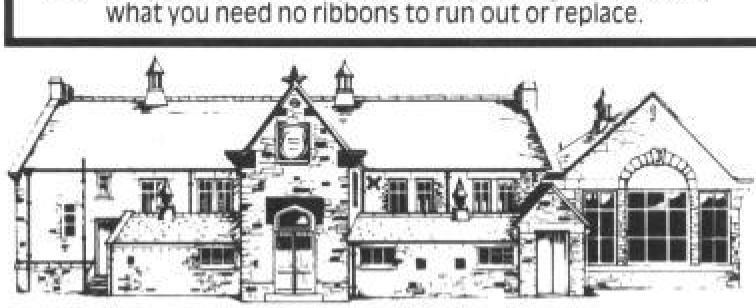
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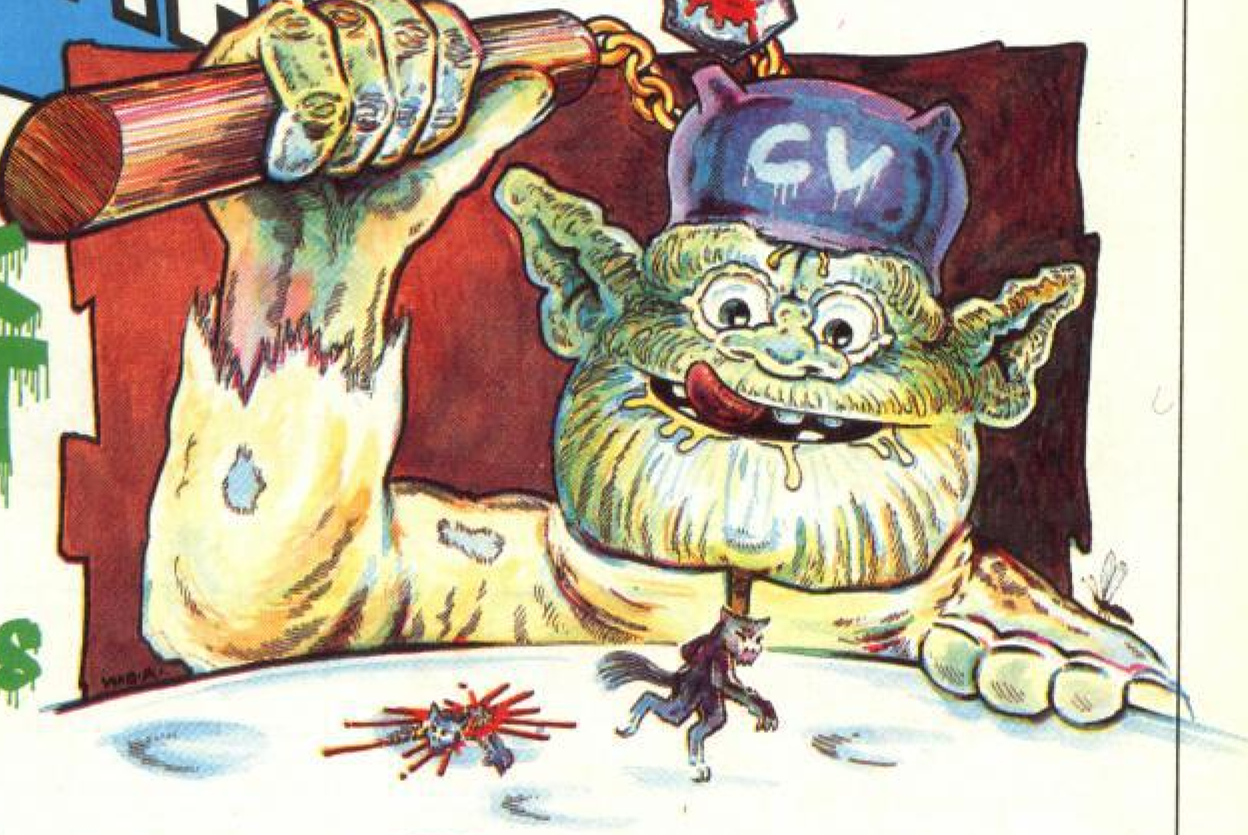
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CHUCK VOMIT ON VALENTINES DAY

Bah! Valentine's Day. I hate it. All that prancing around in frilly shirts with boxes of lizard giblets tied up in gnome skins, trying to woo yer average bile-faced she-troll through her stomach. What about *my* flipping stomach, that's what I want to know. It's been upset ever since I swigged that second bottle of slime, imported from Spain by Uncle Ripperbile. Must have been something fresh in it. Bleah! What do I care about blinking she-trolls – stick them headfirst in a trough of rotting cabbage, that's the way to bring them round.

All I want is the quiet life, pulling the wings off my pet flies, throwing up where I want to . . . oh yeah, and playing the odd computer game. Just to make me even more depressed, we haven't even had a proper text adventure in. I expect we'll have an earthquake next – either that or billy-goats will become extinct. Just my luck. Still, your average homicidal troll can have a lot of throat-slashing fun with a couple of RPGs – especially ones as gory as these. Fab.

Right that's it. I'm off to club a couple of goats.

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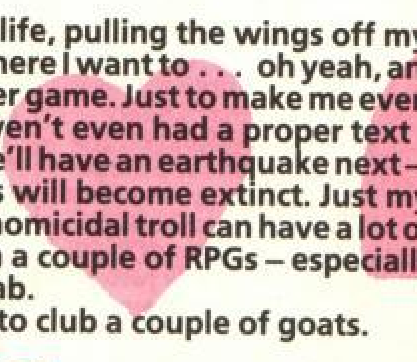


▲ It's up to you to stop the baron – I can't help you now . . .

Being a cosmopolitan sort of troll, I've met quite a few monsters in my time – dragons, orcs (phwoar! do they stink), gnomes, Maff Evans, serpents, you know the sort of thing. A real society bloke, me. Still, I've got to hand it to you – I've never met anything as disgusting as a Screaming Nug, a Brain Spate or a Bowel Root. Bleuch!

You meet a lot of those sort of creatures when you're the only peasant on the planet Bantross brave enough to save the world. Oh yeah, that's your mission: that nefarious, nasty, boil-ridden wicked person, Baron Taragas, has found Blacksilver (magic with the power to destroy) and is planning to use it against the cute, gorgeous, wonderful, beautiful Princess Aylea, guardian of peace. Trust those spoilsports at Epyx not to let you fight for the Baron – no, they have to go and force you to play for the icky, goody-two-shoes Princess instead. I ask you. Yeuch!

First things first: you've got to look for Aylea's brother and hand over the token she left you in a dream. Off you go then through an overhead view landscape (*Ultima*-style) pulping monsters and visiting castles, 3D dungeons (eventually) and towns. If you've got the dosh you can get rid of most of it at equipment stores, magic stalls and gambling shops (phwoar!). Sometimes you can even get into a bit of extra



money by working for a villager for a day, but you've got to be careful not to make enemies. Collaborate with prisoners or fail to pay your debts and – kaput! Goodnight Josephine.

All possible actions are always displayed on the screen: if you pick speaking or fighting options, you've got ▶

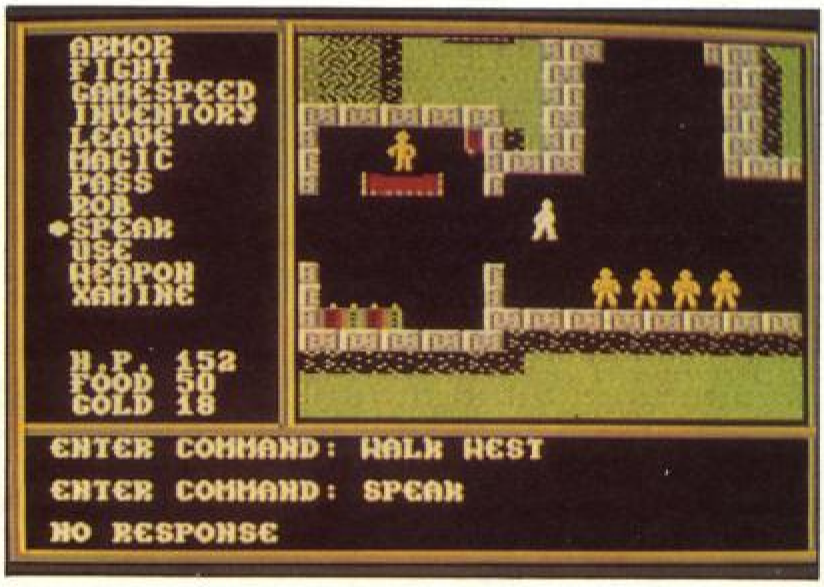
CHUCK VOMIT

"CHUCK!" DOES HE? – NICE!

several further choices still. Not as involved as some of the *Ultima* games, but still pretty deep.

There's a wagon-full of puzzles as well, with plenty to get you thinking right from the word go. If you ever make it to the dungeons, it'll take longer than yer average gnome feast before you leave!

Graphics (except for the dead atmospheric dungeons) aren't mega-spectacular, and neither is the sound (well, is it ever in an RPG?) but boy, does the gameplay make up for it. I'm still convinced that nothing quite beats the *Ultima* series, but with loads of puzzles, a really huge environment to explore and plenty of different monsters, you'd be stark staring mad if you didn't sell your grandmother, trade in your Valentine or stick your brother in a bucket of slime to give this a go.



▲ You can't be nasty in a place like this – worse luck!

The low-down is this: if you want something to really take your mind off those damp, depressing billy-goat-less nights, singing miserable songs about lizards to yourself, or if you're just after a dead cool game, get hold of a copy of this – it's a lot better than a poke in the eye with a pointed stick.

ATMOSPHERE	75%
PUZZLE FACTOR	80%
INTERACTION	62%
LASTABILITY	93%
OVERALL	87%

QUESTRON II

SSI/US Gold, Amiga £24.99

Well, spit in my billy-goat's eye if this isn't another RPG that's been around on the 64 for a mega long time. That hard-hatted Phillippa woman gave it 81% last summer, probably just around the time when six gnomes on their way to a garden convention decided to shelter under my bridge. Dead good banquet, that.

Er . . . yeah, right. Let's do a recap of what this here story's all about. Back in the good old days when evil was allowed to run unchecked in Landor, six mad sorcerors got together to produce a very nasty book – a magic book, to be precise. All you have to do is go back in time and make sure it's never created. Easy, eh?

The action is displayed with full overhead view pretty much *Ultima*-style except that you only ever control one character and all your options (fight, climb, use magic, loot, wear etc) are always displayed on screen. Basically, you leg it round a countryside of swamps, forests and mountains bashing some pretty ugly monsters (vipods, mutant carps, stink worms, jelly nymphs) and looking for food. Towns (where you can gamble, buy food, spells and a whole load of other gadgi items), cathedrals, tombs and 3D dungeons are dotted around the place – but your main, well-hard, mega-objective is to get to the Hall of Visions for a bit of advice.

Easier said than done, that. For a start, you haven't got a map (though it's not difficult to make your own) and worse still, it's pretty hard going if you try and fight everything right from the word go. The more puzzles you solve, the higher your character rating, the more advanced magic, weapons (fancy things like a fauchard, whatever that is) and means of transport (llama, ships, eagle) you can buy. Trouble is, you may not survive that long. Your best plan (apart from to stop for a slime-break and a fried lizard leg) is to suss out which creatures are easy to kill and get the hell out of it when any others appear. Oh yeah – and buying information out of the odd helpful, friendly troll might do you a bit of good. After some of the portrayals of trolls we've had in recent games, I'm pretty chuffed at these; they even got the colour right – a very fetching shade of green. Luverly.

▼ Well – would *you* enter that place? Not even a tough old troll like me goes in unarmed . . .

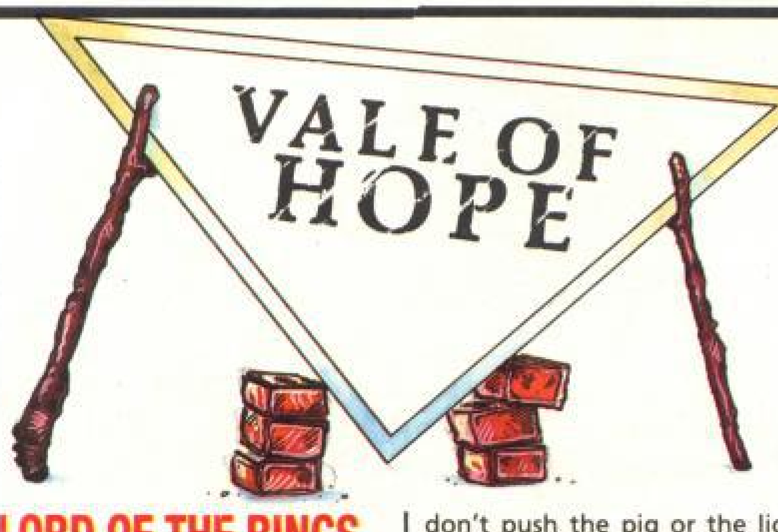


Whaddya think of it so far then? Sounds pretty much like *Ultima IV*. Not exactly, Ashley (he's my pet fly). For a start, the fighting and speaking options are pretty limited (just bash and listen) and they could have included at least a basic map. I could have tangoed to a bit more sound as well. Minimal spot effects aren't much when you've got all those bits of wire soldered together inside the Amiga just so you can have loadsa notes.

Still, the graphics aren't 'arf bad for an RPG and all that bashing, munching and trading does get pretty addictive – especially if you cheat (I did hur, hur, take a look at the Vale Of Hope). Once you've got into the puzzles (which might take up an afternoon's lizard hunt) it really starts to get froody. OK, so it's not the most involved RPG you've ever seen, but it is good fun. And I can tell you, after a week of bile and stomach bug down under Ludlow Bridge, you can forget about gnome pavlova, billy-goat pie and lizard stew – it's fun that *really* counts. Er . . . burp . . .

ATMOSPHERE	80%
PUZZLE FACTOR	70%
INTERACTION	59%
LASTABILITY	93%
OVERALL	80%





LORD OF THE RINGS
MELBOURNE HOUSE

SOLID SOLUTIONS

Believe it or not, we're coming near to the end of the *Lord Of The Rings* solution. If you don't write and tell me what game you'd like to see solved next I'll pick one of the oldest most uninteresting games around – just to annoy you. So get thinking, wimp-faces.

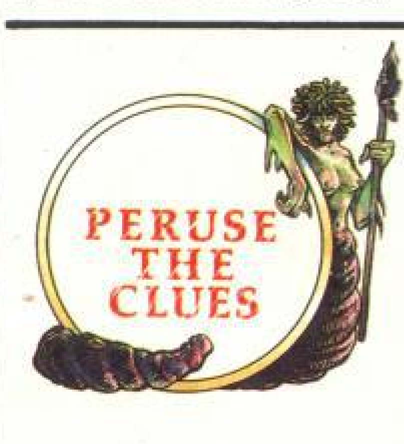
Meanwhile (da daaa) the next exciting instalment follows . . .

You're underground but you don't need a lamp because Gandalf is glowing (what a weirdo) so make sure that he doesn't wander off or you lose him. Climb the wide stairs and go E three times through various passageways until you reach the bare room. Got stuck in the maze yet? Good job you've got li'l old Chuck to help you out: go down, up, down, south and down. OK?

If you got that right, you should now be in a corridor filled with animal heads and blocked by a stone slab. Whatever you do, don't push the pig or the lion, just PUSH WHALE to open the slab (pushing the unicorn closes it). Go east twice and you'll be in the lofty corridor. Move north and wait for Pippin to pick up the stone and throw it in the well. Go east again and then up into the huge passageway.

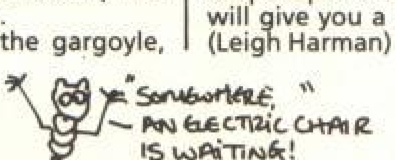
Head south until you hit the large hall. Examine the statue to the west, then ignore the E and NE exits and head back N, then E through the door. You should be in the large square room with an exit to the east through which Gandalf won't let you go yet. Examine the book and a block and as soon as you hear the noise, close the door. When the orcs enter, ATTACK ORCS WITH SWORD and watch everybody join in. When they're finally dead (and serve them right too, I hate orcs), you can go east. Gandalf suddenly rushes off but be careful to take heed of his advice – ie, go east and down through the set of bare rooms, down again and then south and wait for Gandalf. He's the one with the light, remember.

That's it for this month folks. More next munf.



Chuck churns out another choicy bag of chirpy chitterlings. Well, OK, I had a bit of help from Julian Loveday for his tips on some of the newest adventures out. A £30 software voucher on its way.

INGRID'S BACK: to blow up the steamroller, give it some food. To retrieve the filofax from the changing room, hide behind lounger, then wait for Jasper. For the combination to the safe, hide behind the curtain.
FISH: to retrieve the gargoyle, find some cord and something to stand on. If you don't want to get nabbed by the hippies, turn off the light when you go past them.
LANCELOT: to defeat the army at Tintagel, put coals in the cauldron and then put coals on the pile in the ship.
JINXTER: to get out of the cell, first wake Xam. Tie rope to manacles, put candle in milk bottle, strike match, light candle with match, but bottle under rope, north (into dumb waiter) and wait until the rope burns and the outer hatch opens. (Michael Newman)
QUESTRON II:to make a lot of money really quickly, put all your gold in the bank and allow yourself to be killed. When you're resurrected the money you deposited should still be in the bank. You can keep doing this until you've collected as much money as you want.
QUEST FOR THE GOLDEN EGGCUP: wave wand at crevasse. Give bottle to Wongo.
S.M.A.S.H.E.D.: search under the seat in the jeep.
POOL OF RADIANCE: go to the room containing Ohlo, the wizard. Then move to the room coninting Ohlo's friend, the shopkeeper and say 'Ohlo'. He will give you a potion for Ohlo. (Leigh Harman)



CLEVER CONTACTS

These are all very nice, cuddly people – make sure you treat them right, or I'll beat you up.

Heroes of Karn, Bored of the Rings, Gremlins, Voodoo Castle, Zim Zala Bim, Mugsy's Revenge, Tropical Adventure, Dracula, Holy Grail, The Pawn, Return to Oz, Masters of the Universe, Robin of Sherwood, Fourth Protocol, Price of Magik.
Christophe Brassart, 67 rue de l'Abbe Lemire, 59200 TOURCOING, France.

Tower of Despair, Dracula, Adventureland, Zim Zala Bim, Castle of Terror, Time Tunnel, Eureka.
John Paterson, 8 Bracadale Road, Baillieston, Glasgow G69
Tel: 041 771 7729

Mordons Quest, Spiderman, Hacker
Nigel 'Nemesis' Richardson
Tel: 01 360 8325

The Golden Baton, Worm in Paradise, Hobbit, Fourth Protocol (Pt 3 only).
Andrew Blackman, 133 Ashen Drive, Dartford, Kent DA1 3LY. Tel: 0322 76887 5.30-8.30pm

Dungeon Adventure, Lord of the Rings, Quest for the Holy Grail, Hampstead, Lords of Time, Inca Curse, Espionage Island, Planet of Death
David Lemon, 14 Norton Place, Dunfermline, Fife KY11 4RH Tel: 0383 728353 after 6pm Mon-Fri

Leather Goddesses of Phobos, Zork III, Terrormolinos, Never Ending Story, Heroes of Karn, Mission 1, Gremlins, Robin of Sherwood
Ron McKenzie, 3 Silverstream, Freystrop, Haverfordwest, Dyfed SA61 2SN

Adventureland, SubSunk, Heroes of Karn, Empire of Karn, Munroe Manor, Hacker, Classic Adventure, all early Infocom titles, Jinxter, Guild Of Thieves, Plundered Hearts, Dracula, Hitchhiker's Guide, Mindshadow, Trager Sanction, Wishbringer, Trinity, The Pawn.
Chris Fleming, 235 Meola Road, Pt Chev, Auckland, N Zealand. Tel: 867074

Voodoo Castle, Heroes of Karn, Pirate Adventure, Ten Little Indians, Hobbit, Lost City, Gremlins, Wizard of Akyrz, Quest for the Holy Grail, Zim Sala bim, Island Adventure, Castle Dracula.
Paul Flanagan, 6 Corry, Belleek, Co Fermanagh, N Ireland. Tel: 036565 594

The Hobbit, Erik the Viking, Castle of Terror, Eureka, Voodoo Castle, The Count, Heroes of Karn, Empire of Karn, Zork I, Zork III, Exodus, Ultima III, The Boggit, Lords of Time, Neverending story, The Hulk, Temple of Terror, Ultima IV, Seabase Delta, Kentilla, Valkyrie 17, Sherlock, The fourth protocol, The Helm, Wizard of Akyrz, Perseus and Andromeda, Lord of the rings (part 1), Emerald Isle, Quest for the Holy Grail, Hacker, Colossal Cave.
Steven Kelly, 4 South View, Whins Lane, Simonstone, Burnley, Lancs BB12 7QU. Tel: 0282 74765 (between 6pm and 10 pm)

The Hobbit, Seabase Delta, Kentilla, Zzzz, Spytrek, Robo City, Imagination, Demon Knight, Kobyashi Naru, Tower of Despair, Time Tunnel, Citadel of Chaos, Eureka, Sorceror of Claymorgue Castle, The Quest For The Holy Grail, Rigel's Revenge, See-ka of Assiah (part one), Football Frenzy, Velnor's Lair
Paul Hardy, 33 Fir Tree drive, Wales, Sheffield S31 8LZ.

Hitchhiker's Guide, Zork I, Zork II, Planetfall, Leather Goddesses, Cutthroats, Infidel, Stationfall.
Dave Rogers, 15 Elm Terrace, Westfield, Radstock, Bath, Avon BA3 3XP.

Amazon, Borrowed Time, Castle of Terror, Castle Adventure, Computer Adventure, Dracula part 1, Grand Larceny, Haunted House, Himalayan Adventure, Labyrinth, Mad Mummy, Mindshadow, Murder on the Waterfront, Never ending story, Ninja, Raka-tua Volcano, Scroll of Akhbar, Seabase Delta, Silver Mountain, Subsunk, The Boggit, The Dallas quest, The Hobbit, Ultima IV, Voodoo Castle, Zork I, Zork II, Zork III, Zzzz.
Mario Moeller, 38 Greenvale Drive, Greenvale, 3047, Vic. Australia.

Ultima IV, The Bard's Tale, Voodoo Castle, Phantasie I, Never Ending Story, Dracula, The Prince of Magic, Borrowed Time, The Pawn, Seabase Delta, Deadline, Zork III, Wishbringer.
Derek Wong, 42 Ingram Road, Thornton Heath, Surrey, CR4 8EB.

Hitchhiker's Guide, The Hobbit, Lord of the Rings, The Shadows of Mordor, Guild of Thieves, Jinxter.
Warren Lee Melia, 1 Thornhill Avenue, Rishton, Blackburn, Lancs, BB1 4EZ.

Jack The Ripper, Dracula, Kayleth, Mindshadow, Never Ending story.
Derek Scott, 42 South Parade, Leven, North Humberside HU17 5LJ.

Starcross, Suspended, Suspect, Leather Goddesses, Zork I, Zork II, Zork III, Deadline, Planetfall, Infidel, Cutthroats, Ballyhoo, Lurking Horror, Seastalker, Bureaucracy, Trinity, Moonmist, Hollywood Hijinx, Hitchhiker's Guide, Wishbringer, Sorcerer, Spellbreaker, Enchanter, The Pawn, Ultima I, Ultima III, Ultima IV, Sherlock, Gremlins, The Hulk, Terrormolinos, The Fourth Protocol, The Hobbit.
Billy Kavanagh, 49 Drake Hall, Westhoughton, Bolton, BL5 2RA.

Never Ending Story, Zzzz, Quest for the Holy Grail.
Tony Kinnear, 49 Wainwright Avenue, Hutton, Brentwood, Essex, CM13 2SZ.

Bally Hoo, Bored of the Rings, Borrowed Time, Deadline, Emerald Isle, Enchanter, Eureka (German, Arthurian, Roman), Gremlins, Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy, The Hobbit, Leather Goddesses of Phobos, Mind Shadow, Munroe Manor, Moonmist, Pirate Adventure, Planetfall, Planet of Death, Knight Orc Pt 1, Seastalker, Ship of Doom, Spell Breaker, Spiderman, Starcross, Stationfall, Tass Times, Lurking Horror, Tracer Sanction, Valkyrie 17, Very big cave adventure, Wishbringer, Worm in Paradise, Zork I, Zork II, Zork III.
Ian Gay, 18 Earsdon Close, Westdenton, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE5 2RL.

SMASHED, Dracula, Frankenstein, Kentilla, Quest For The Holy Grail, Gnome Ranger I, II, Eureka II, IV, Zim Sala Bim, Cricket Crazy I.
Scott West, 10 Charnock Dale Rd, Gleadless, Sheffield, S12 3HP.

The Hobbit, Seastalker, Trinity, Leather Goddesses, Beurocracy, Hitchhiker's Guide, Stationfall.
Carl Kuttelwascher, 6 Robin Hill Drive, Camberley, Surrey. GU15 1EG

Enchanter, Zork I, II, III, Planetfall, Stationfall, Plundered Hearts, The Pawn, Shadowgate, Wishbringer, Leather Goddesses of Phobos, Ingrid's Back, Hollywood Hijinx.
Julian Loveday, 23 Herbert Road, Emerson Park, Hornchurch, Essex, RM11 3LM.

Heroes Of Karn, Empire of Karn, Dracula, Seabase Delta, Spiderman, Hulk, Zzzz, Quest for the Holy Grail, Lord of the Rings, Price of Magik, The Pawn, Twin Kingdom Valley.
A Ridge, 4 Corwallis Avenue, Clifton, Bristol, BS8 4PP

Twin Kingdom Valley, The Hobbit, Hitchhiker's Guide, Return To Eden, Terrormolinos, Dallas Quest, Jinxter, Deja Vu, Shadowgate, The Three Muskateers, Pludered Hearts.
Steven Coomber, 6 Maysfield Close, Portishead, Bristol. BS209RL. Tel: 0272 844218 (6-9pm)

The Boggit, Hulk, Kayleth, Kobyashi Naru, Sherlock.
William Stephenson, 10 Inchcolm Terrace, South Queensferry, West Lothian, Scotland. EH30 9NA

Corruption, Tass Times in Tonetown, King's Quest III.
Simon Ball, 1A Castle Flats, South Street, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Leicestershire, LE6 5BQ. Tel: 0530 415103 (5-10pm)

Zzzz, Kentilla, Seabase Delta, Token of Ghall, Pirate Adventure, Voodoo Castle, Spacy Odyssey, Buckaroo Banzai, Redhawk, Kwah, Colossaldventure, Dungeon Adventure, Impossible Mission, Adventureland, Lord of the Rings, Labyrinth, The Count, Rebel Planet, Sea of Blood, The Bard's Tale I and II, Jack the Ripper, Legacy of the Ancients, Frankenstein, Book Of The Dead, Temple Of Terror, Neverending Story, Deja Vu, Masters Of The Universe, Fourth Protocol
Paul Shields, 35 Threshelford, Basildon, Essex, SS16 5UB.

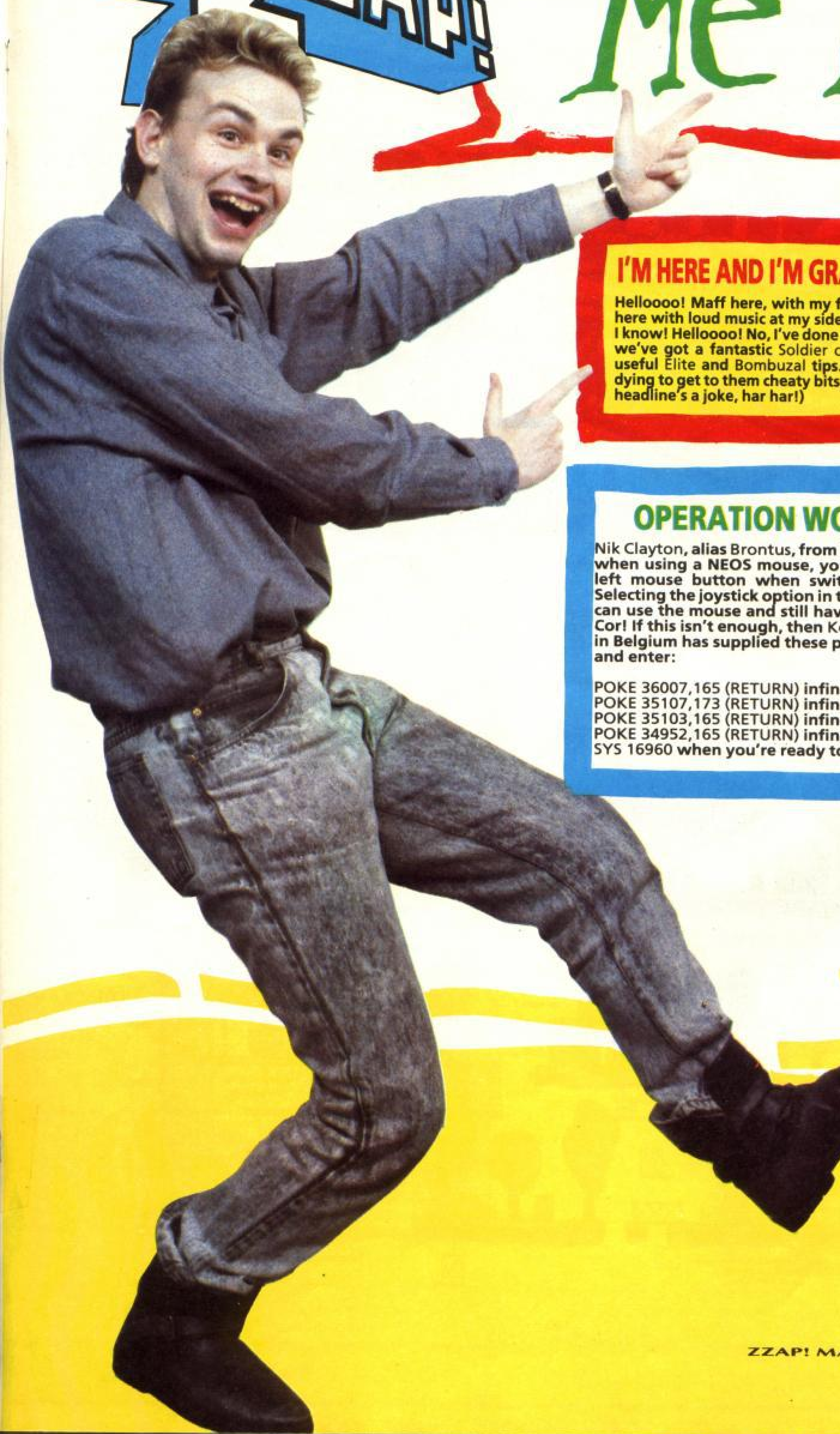
Zork II, Gnome Ranger, Knight Orc (part one).
Steve Parker, 13 Elizabeth Road, Seaton, East Devon, EX12 2DS.

Zork I, II and III, Hitchhikers Guide To The Galaxy, Knight Orc, Dragon World, Ultima 3, Infidel, Starcross, Seastalker, Cutthroats, Deadline, Sorceror, Suspect, Suspended, Transylvania, Ultima I, II and III, Ulysses and the Golden Fleece, Witness, Planetfall, Crowley, The Count, Ghost Town, Morgue, Strange Odyssey, Pirate Adventure, Pyramid Of Doom, Voodoo Castle, Adventureland, Mystery Funhouse, Mission Impossible, Sorceror of Claymorgue Castle, Golden Voyage, Alice in Wonderland, Cyborg, Blade of Blackpool, Death in the Caribbean, New Adventure, The Institute, Mask Of The Sun, Masquerade, Mindwheel, King's Quest, Questron, The Wizard and the Princess.
Richard Verity, I Beack Road, Motueka, Nelson, New Zealand. Tel: New Zealand (0524) 88660.

Zork I, II and III, Suspended, Starcross, Deadline, Gruds in Space, Hulk, Spiderman, Asylum, Dallas Quest, Wishbringer, Hollywood Hijinx, Rigel's Revenge.
Mischa Schweitzer, Assumburg 9, 1121 EA Landsmeer, Holland.

Knight Orc, Mindshadow, Bastow Manor, Dracula, Neverending Story.
Jamie Gooding, 29 Ross Street, Surrey Hills, Victoria 3127, Australia.

ZZAP! OOOH LOOK... ITS Me TIPS



I'M HERE AND I'M GRATE! (This is no joke)

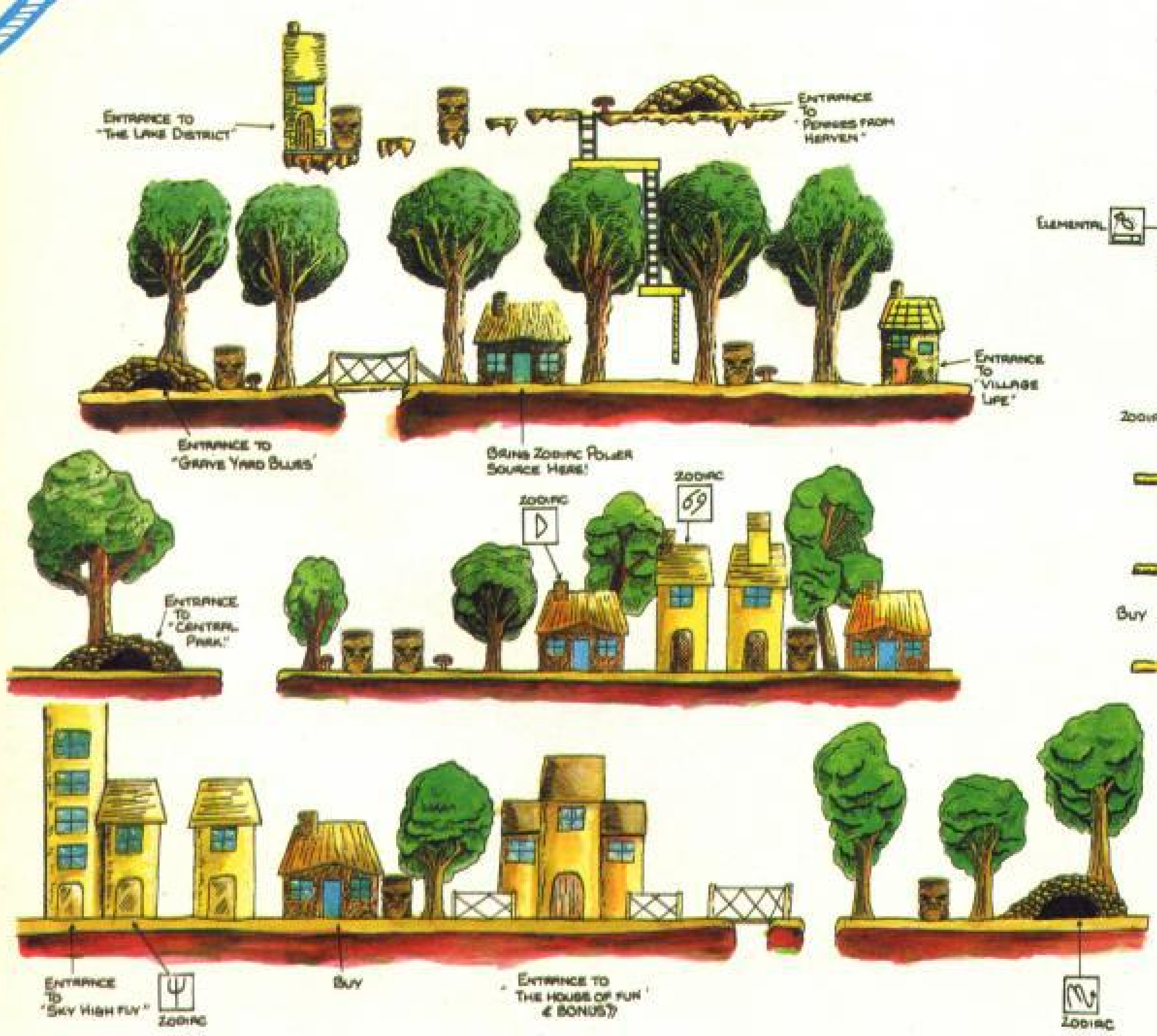
Helloooo! Maff here, with my fantastic first tips section! As I sit here with loud music at my side, I wonder what I can say to you. I know! Helloooo! No, I've done that haven't I? Anyway, dis munf we've got a fantastic Soldier of Fortune **map as well as mega useful** Elite **and** Bombuzal **tips. Now, I can see that you're just dying to get to them cheaty bits, so let's GO! (Oh, by the way, the headline's a joke, har har!)**

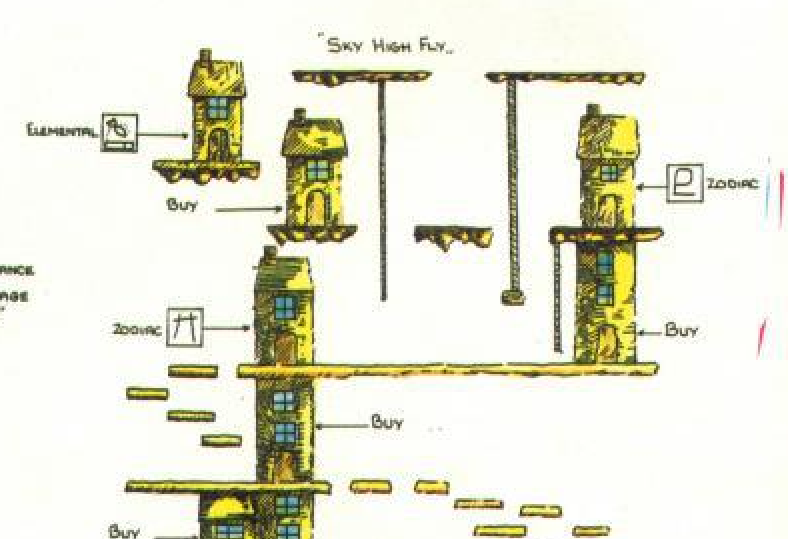
OPERATION WOLF (Ocean)

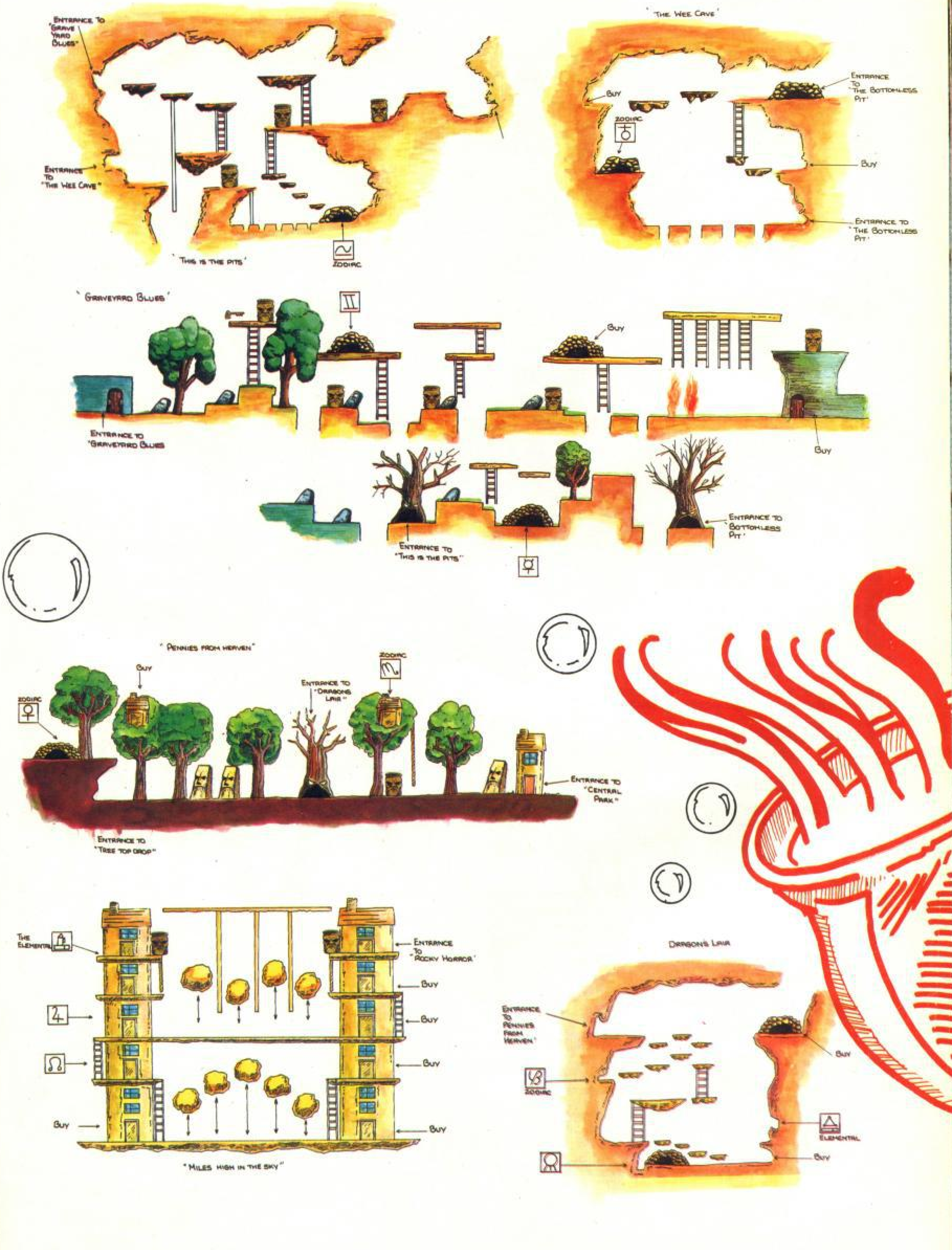
Nik Clayton, **alias** Brontus, **from Reading informs me that when using a NEOS mouse, you should hold down the left mouse button when switching on the machine. Selecting the joystick option in the game means that you can use the mouse and still have nine rounds of ammo. Cor! If this isn't enough, then** Keon Smedts **from Leuven in Belgium has supplied these pokes. Reset the machine and enter:**

POKE 36007,165 (RETURN) **infinite time**
POKE 35107,173 (RETURN) **infinite cartridges**
POKE 35103,165 (RETURN) **infinite bullets**
POKE 34952,165 (RETURN) **infinite bombs**
SYS 16960 **when you're ready to kick . . . er, yes.**

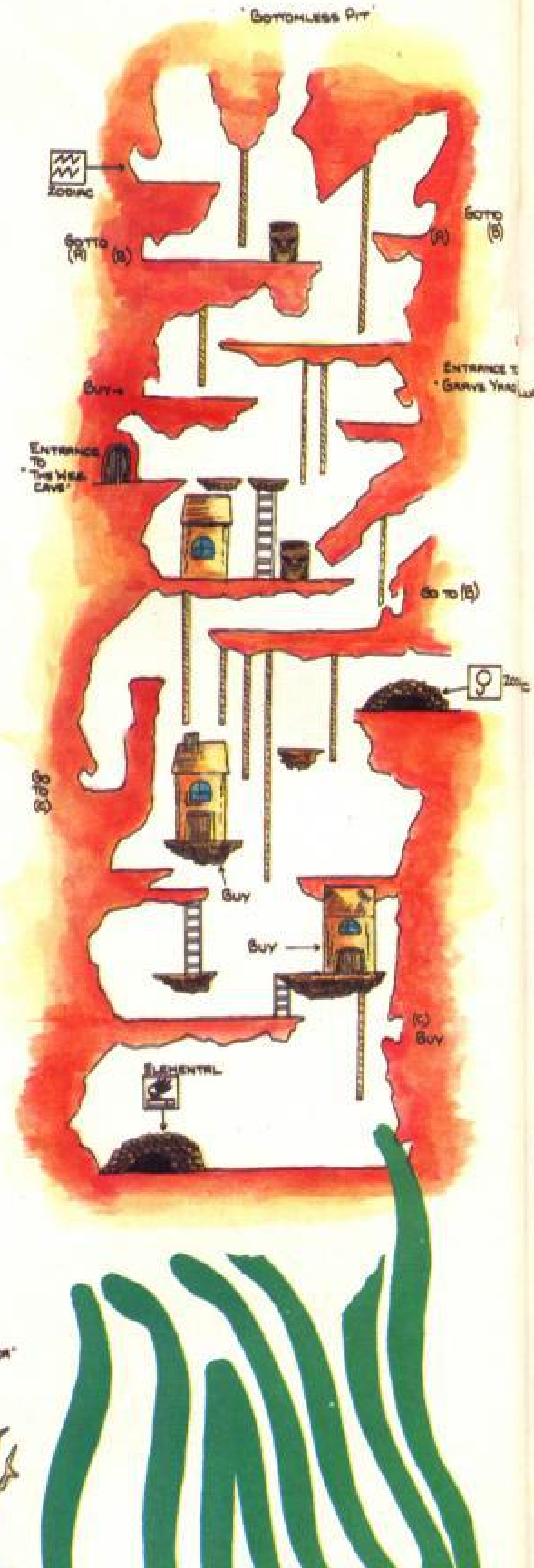
SOLDIER OF FORTUNE





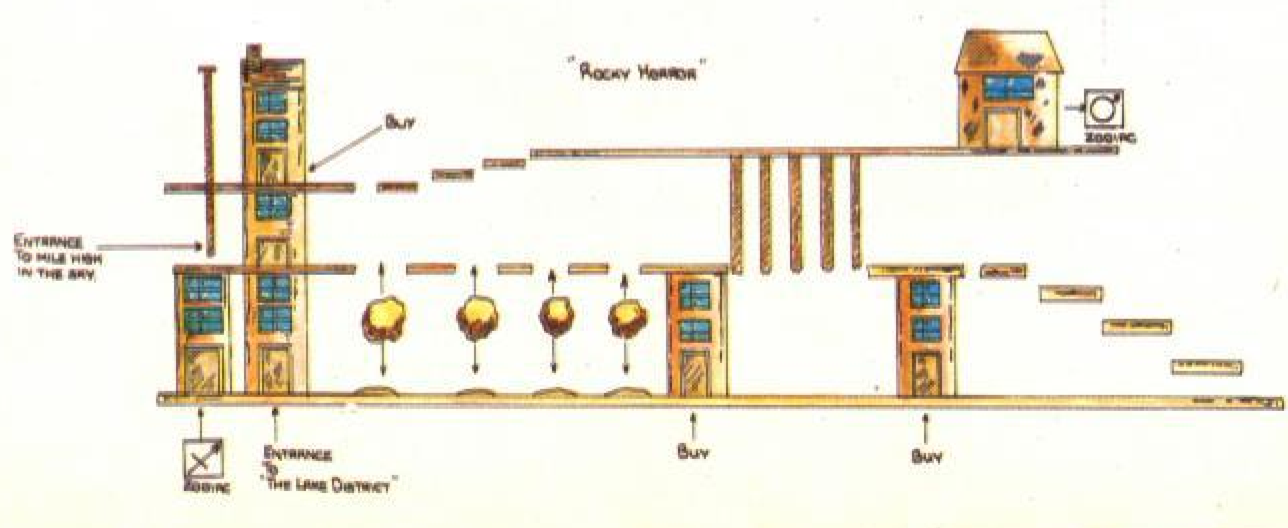

ENTRANCE TO "GRAVE YARD BLUES"
ENTRANCE TO "THE WEE CAVE"
'THIS IS THE PITS'
ZODIAC
'THE WEE CAVE'
BUY
ZODIAC
ENTRANCE TO "THE BOTTOMLESS PIT'
BUY
ENTRANCE TO 'THE BOTTOMLESS PIT'
'GRAVEYARD BLUES'
BUY
ENTRANCE TO 'GRAVEYARD BLUES
BUY
ENTRANCE TO "THIS IS THE PITS"
ENTRANCE TO 'BOTTOMLESS PIT'
'PENNIES FROM HEAVEN"
BUY
ZODIAC
ENTRANCE TO "DRAGONS LAIR"
ZODIAC
ENTRANCE TO "CENTRAL PARK"
ENTRANCE TO "TREE TOP DROP"
THE ELEMENTAL
ENTRANCE TO 'ROCKY HORROR'
BUY
BUY
BUY
BUY
BUY
"MILES HIGH IN THE SKY"
DRAGON'S LAIR
ENTRANCE TO PENNIES FROM HEAVEN'
BUY
ZODIAC
ELEMENTAL
BUY

SOLDIER OF FORTUNE











BOMBUZAL (Imageworks)

Many thanx to aaaalll those people (too many to list) that sent in the super-froody codes for this mega puzzle game. Here are the 17 codes and their relevant levels:

BOMB – 000	LEAD – 048	SONG – 096
RACE – 008	WEED – 056	FIRE – 104
RATT – 016	RING – 064	LAMP – 112
LISA – 024	GIRL – 072	TREE – 120
DAVE – 032	GOLD – 080	SINK – 128
IRON – 040	OPAL – 088	

Also, here is a list of codes that have other effects. Try them if you dare! Haaahahah!

BIKE	SPOT	NOSE
BIRD	PALM	EYES
TAPE	LOCK	HAIR
VASE	SAFE	SIGN
PILL	WORM	MYTH

GAPLUS (Silverbird)

Little tip from Keon Smedts. Reset the machine, type POKE 32496,173 (RETURN) then SYS 4170 and you will have unlimited lives. Yay!

ELITE (Firebird)

Wahay! Here it is! The cheat mode for Elite on the Amiga! First of aaaall, when the game asks you to enter the password, type in SARA (RETURN), then the correct code. Start the game and press the asterisk (star) on the numeric keypad and HEY PRESTO! The hack screen! Now you can change values to add items to your inventory.

NUMBER	VALUE	ITEM
23	02	Large Cargo Bay
24	01	ECM System
26	01	Pulse Laser
28	01	Beam Laser
2C	01	Escape Capsule
2F	01	Energy Bomb
32	01	Docking Computer
34	03	Galactic Hyperdrive
36	01	Mining Lasers
38	01	Military Lasers
3C	01	ECM Jammer
3F	01	Cloaking Device
40	01	Food
47	01	Textiles
49	01	Radioactives
4C	01	Slaves
50	01	Liquor/Wines
54	01	Narcotics
5C	01	Computers
63	01	Machinery
67	01	Alloys
69	01	Firearms
6C	01	Furs
72	01	Minerals
75	01	Gold
79	01	Platinum
83	01	Gem-Stones
84	01	Alien Items
88	01	Unhappy Refugees
8C	01	Thargoid Documents

When you've altered all the settings you want, press ESCAPE to return to the game. Thanks to Andrew McGarrigle from South Yorkshire for that brillig tip.

ARMALYTE (Thalamus)

Dead good game, Armalyte. Dead hard game, too. So what we have here is some of them lickle poke things from Barron Pugg to make it a bit easier. First, reset the machine and enter the following.

POKE 60121,96:POKE 40960,120:POKE 1024,120:POKE 1025,169 (RETURN)
POKE 1026,54:POKE 1027,133:POKE 1028,1 (RETURN)
POKE 1029,76:POKE 1030,0:POKE 1031,160 (RETURN)
SYS 1024 (RETURN) to restart with invincibility.

Level one will appear as a mess, but the rest loads fine.
Aaaaannnd secondly . . .
Here's a listing from Zarch in Sheffield which enables you to listen to Martin Walker's fab 'n' triff in-game music without the other noises annoying you. Load up the game, reset the 64 on the title screen then enter and RUN this listing.

```
10 POKE 54296,15
20 SYS 49152
30 SYS 49241
40 FOR Z=0 TO 5:NEXT Z
50 GOTO 30
```

EMPIRE STRIKES BACK (Domark)

No ZZAP! tips section would be really complete without a word from Mick Mills and Al, so here is one – 'Sasquatch'. Only joking! Har har! It's really a couple of pokes giving you infinite shields and/or towcables in the second Star Wars game. Reset the computer and type POKE 37048,16(RETURN) for infinite towcables and POKE 51917,173 (RETURN) for infinite shields. SYS 32704 restarts. However, if you haven't got a reset switch and lack the necessary dexterity with a paper clip, then try this listing. The effect changes depending on which REM line you take out.

```
0 REM 'EMPIRE STRIKES BACK' BY MICK MILLS AND AL
1 FOR A=256 TO 272:READ B:POKE A,B:T1=T1+B:NEXT:A=322
2 READ B:POKE A,B:A=A+1:T2=T2+B:IF B<>127 GOTO 2
3 IF T2<>1311 OR T2<395 OR T2>1811 THEN PRINT"ERROR":END
4 POKE 448,208:POKE 449,128:SYS 264
10 DATA 2,1,141,111,11,76,2,11,32,86,245,169,1,141,184,2,96
20 DATA 169,165,141,184,144 :REM INFINITE SHIELDS
21 DATA 206,205,202 :REM INFINITE TOWCABLES
22 DATA 76,192,127
```

Well there you have it. Not bad for a first go. Short and sweet but with some nifty stuff. The first **Me Tips** cartographer of the month is Bacon for his map of Soldier of Fortune, buuuut he'll have to send us his address if he wants a prize, since he didn't this time. Tipster of the month is Andrew McGarrigle for his Elite cheat (ha! Nearly poetry!). Well useful! Oh, by the way, if you've got any pokes, cheats, tips or maps even better than those this here month, send them tooo . . . **ME TIPS, ZZAP! TOWERS, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE, SY8 1DB.** And remember to send your name and address or NO DOSH! 'Till next month *Byeeeee!*

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ZZAP! COMP

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Ever fancied owning your own Ken? Well, tough luck, matey, 'cos Ken belongs to us at ZZAP! *(Hey! I'm my own Fish, man! – Ken).* Anyway, forget about our Results megastar, and concentrate, con-cen-trate on the title above you. The key words, for the slower members among you, are *F-I-S-H* and *A-Q-U-A-R-I-U-M*. Right, that's the hard bit over with. To tie in with that zany, madcap, etc, etc game, *Zak McKracken and the Alien Mindbenders*, awarded one o' them Sizzlers in this very issue, Lucasfilm and US Gold have got together and decided to give you lot a freebie or 20.

What are we on about? Well, one first prize winner will receive a genuine, top rate, fab 'n' triff huuuge aquarium, full of all the bits and pieces that make an aquarium really aquarium-like. So, you'll get one of them oxygenators, and all them plant weed thingies, and the crappy stone castles, and something else . . . er . . . oh yeah, that's it – there'll be loads of FISH. Not the battered variety, nor again the kind you find lying around a fishmongers in the 'Fish Bits' bargain bucket. Nope, we mean real life tropical-types with shimmering fins and gorgeous gills and all the other appendages that make fish exciting to watch and make friends with. Of course, there are the little brown sausages, too – but doesn't one look into those fishy eyes compensate for all that?

Anyway, that – along with a copy of the game – is the first prize. 20 runners up will simply get a disk copy (for 'tis disk only, I'm afraid) of that fruity, madcap, zany program – *and you can specify whether you want the 64 or Amiga version.*

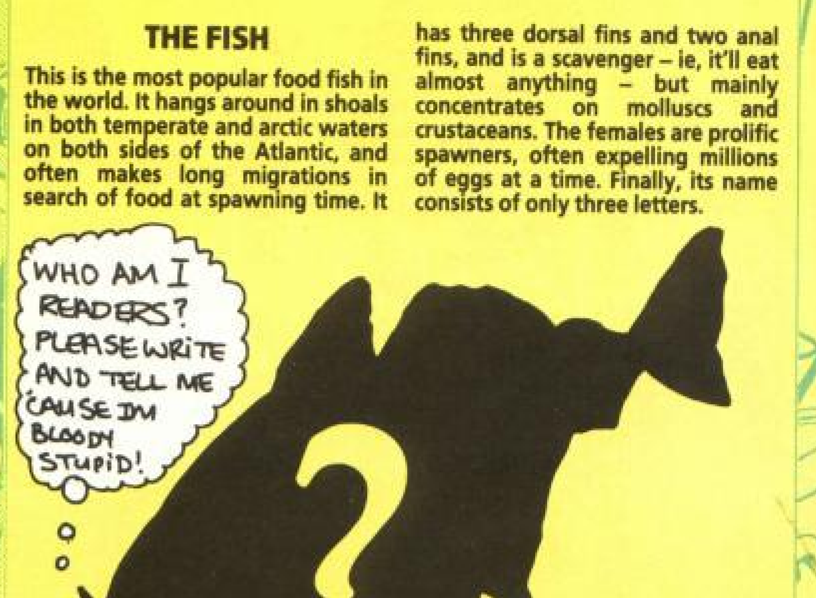
Now the hard bit. Luckily, we've got a fish expert in the office (Ken), who's supplied us with a question. Seeing as he hasn't got a mystery fish corner in this month's results, he's supplied us with the description of a fish (below); all you've got to do is identify it. Easy, huh? Send them answers in before March 14th, or there'll be no slimy-scaled creatures in your household.



Ken's mystery FISH Corner

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i think the fish is a ....

my computer is ....

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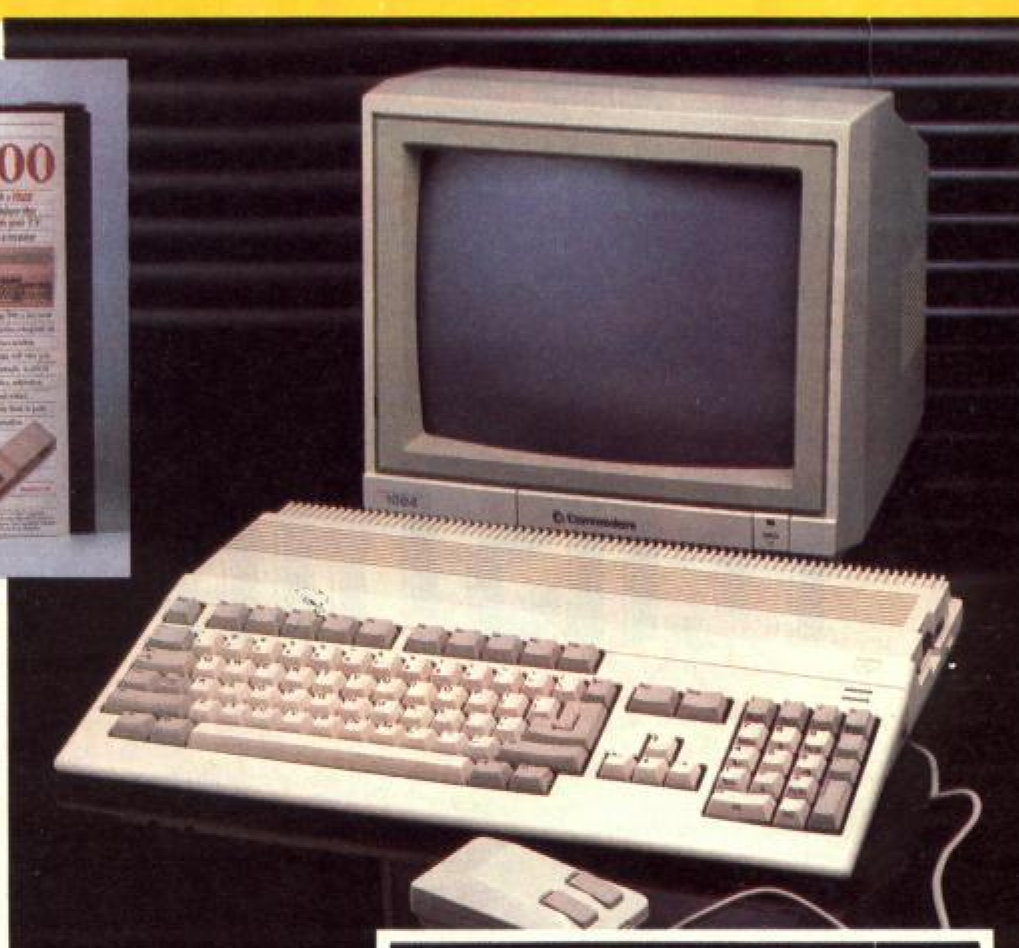
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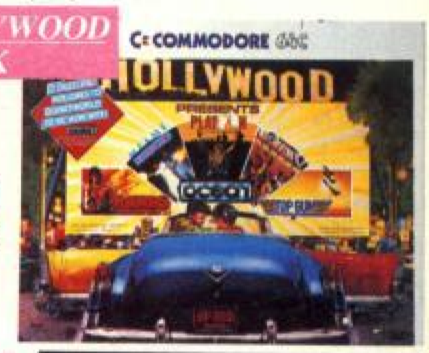
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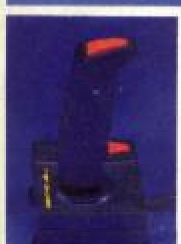
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WALKER'S WAY

This man is so hot you could cook your breakfast on him. Who are we talking about? It's Martin 'Axe Man' Walker and his amazing technicolour Way. How far is he into the CITADEL? Read on and find out or we'll send da boys round . . .

Monday 12th December

My copy of ZZAP! (January Issue) dropped onto the doormat this morning. The ROBOCOP demo gave me quite a bit of fun, partly because it seemed like a representative version of at least part of the final game – unlike the majority of freebies which can be such early versions that they completely put you off buying the finished product! How many tapes have you got that you carefully peeled from the front of magazines to avoid spoiling the cover, and then only loaded them up once? I've got a drawer full! It does take a little more effort on the part of the programmers and ZZAP! to organise and produce a stand alone single level demo, but when done well I certainly might buy something on the strength of it! Wouldn't you? What do you MEAN no?

Tuesday 13th December

With some more additions to the all-singing all-dancing level designer the number of possible city 'pieces' has now risen from 16 to 32 (Of course when I say risen I really mean that I've designed some new ones!) This effectively allows the corridors and intersections to have much more variety, and more devious cities to be constructed (rather like getting a second set of Scalextric track pieces allows you to build more complex layouts).

Just to prove the merit of taking a total of three days to produce a 'construction set', I then produced a corker of a level in under one hour, and then completed the revisions to the metal city that were waiting. Incidentally, remember that the graphics are evolving with the game – the early diary screenshots showed them, warts 'n' all! (Perhaps I should show mockups produced with my ST in 512 colours. Hmmm. No. That would be cheating wouldn't it, Andrew? Tee hee!) I always remember what Paul Cooper (Thalamus supremo – sounds like a new snack to eat on toast!) said about screen shots. 'Until you see it move you don't know whether it's even part of the game, and not a specially prepared artist's impression'.

Mind you, I have actually met someone who has seen the new Konix joystick. And yes – some of the previews of the artist's impression WERE printed upside down in various magazines. Not very ergonomic when the handle sticks out of the top eh?

Wednesday 14th December

The proximity traps work beautifully. In fact, with the larger format floor tiles the distances can be seen more easily in terms of 'squares'. As you approach an unopened device, at a certain number of 'squares' away it activates automatically (sensing your presence) so that by the time you get alongside, it's curtains (pull the other one!) So now it's time to add some more of my original ideas for a 'boardgame' strategy.

I want to replace mindless blasting with gameplay that uses a few more brain cells. First, all the proximities were made much smaller, and the remote triggering by hitting traps with your own bullets was temporarily removed (this could be provided by a more specialised weapon). This forces you to approach more cautiously, and be more aware of each local trap. Each different type of trap can have a different proximity trigger distance – and, of course, the most useful equipment will force you to get the closest before revealing its contents!

Thursday 15th December

After yesterday's improvements, it was time to package up a demo to send off to my friends and colleagues, CYBERDYNE SYSTEMS, for a bit of feedback. If the postal system isn't too haywire at the moment, there will no doubt be an informative telephone call in a few days time. Off to the post office!

Have you noticed how games which get universally bad reviews in all the magazines have quite often been in the shops for a month or two already? In 'W.H.' today I spotted GAME OVER II high in the charts. What's this, I thought? A mystery product that everyone's buying but few have seen? Then I saw the packaging – big box/poster/high class artwork. It must be a Megagame!! And then I remembered the adverts – double page spread/available for 6 machines, and the dreadful truth dawned on me. HYPE! And then finally, after rooting through all the shelves, I came across one lone copy of INTENSITY. Its case was cracked and half missing, with the artwork bent at the corners . . . . So this is what happens to people who bravely try to produce something new and original in the gameplay department. Merry Christmas, Andrew! (Mind you, by the time this appears in print it will be February, so perhaps that should be Happy Valentine's Day. Well, Happy February anyway!)

Friday 16th December

After yesterday's public embarrassment in the originality department, today I looked out my copy of MORPHEUS – I've been meaning to get back and play this a bit more for some time (Too busy working to play games, eh?). since reading AB's own tips in a certain rival magazine it seemed the time was ripe for another bash, especially to see if using disruptors really are the best way to get further into the game. Although having the disk version does allow me to save my all time high scores, it also lets everyone else see how low they are! However, after several hours of play, I only managed to progress as far as system 16 – not much of an improvement on my previous best of system 15. Back to the drawing board (any special hints for fellow diarists, AB?)

Saturday 17th December

Do you remember, back in the dim and distant past, that I sent out about a dozen of my music demo disks to different software companies looking for work? (ME, not the software houses, you fools!) Well, on 11th June I sent one to Ocean in Manchester. Today, six months later, I received a reply (and a cheeky one at that!) I think someone must be jesting!! Perhaps they were clearing out their desks before Christmas. But at least they replied in the end.

As for the rest. . . . Well, Virgin sent me a charming letter. A few other companies like Activision and Thalamus got in touch and are commissioning lots of musical work. The rest didn't reply at all, but I rather expected that. Don't be discouraged if your submission doesn't get an immediate response. I'm often lucky to get through on the telephone to some companies, even after four or five attempts (although others will chat for ages – while everyone else is trying four or five times to get through in vain!) And don't expect to get your demo disks back. After all, how do you think the frisbee was developed?

Sunday 18th December

On with the 'boardgame'. In line with the new developments, MONITOR now moves a 'square' at a time, and only in four directions. This proved a much better form of control, as it also ensures that your bullets are always lined up with the enemy mobiles (Mind you, theirs always line up with you!) Another advantage is that less processor time is taken by the scrolling routines (Hooray!) Since the cities are formed from horizontal and vertical corridors the no-diagonal restriction is scarcely noticed, so it's a definite thumbs up all round – the control feels much more positive.

Monday 19th December

I suspect that this week will be somewhat chaotic, being so close to Christmas, but I'll keep up the diary as much as possible (what a noble gesture!) Just as an experiment I tried making the mobile aliens invulnerable and giving them instructions to stop when two 'squares' away from MONITOR. By doing this they are often perfectly positioned just out of range of the player's bullets, but ready to hit anything that moves into their line of fire.

With joystick in hand I fired up the new version of the game and prepared for action. Within the first two minutes I got hemmed into a dead end corridor and slowly battered into submission, so a new breed of alien has now evolved that employs its own shields to protect itself unless firing – definitely one to avoid at all costs!

Tuesday 20th December

Christmas shopping. The shelves of all the local software stockists are groaning under the weight of the festive releases. W.H. Smiths also have **HOWARD THE DUCK** and **RAISE THE TITANIC** in stock – I'm not sure if they've been there for ages or whether **ACTIVISION** have an incredibly persuasive sales force! As it's a time for peace and goodwill I'll suggest the latter. Certainly doing my Sherlock Holmes bit they all seemed to have the same amount of dust (I've never understood why this happens – it's a bit of a giveaway trying to sell something covered in dust, isn't it?)

ST and Amiga titles are now appearing more regularly in my high street, though I'm afraid that I still really have to be convinced that I'll be playing a game in three months time before forking out £25!! And once again this means . . . You've guessed right again – READING REVIEWS IN MAGAZINES! (I believe the correct descriptive terms for this are fab, brill and triff).



Wednesday 21st December

More strategy has now evolved in the game. All mobile forces will now look 'ahead' by at least one 'square' to check for solid objects. They seem a lot more intelligent already! Given that so much action is happening on screen, I also suspect that mobiles going off screen need only have their 'going off position' stored. Although this means that they won't track you (reasonable for localised security systems) they may still be waiting if you return that way again, but with all the on screen action you'll not be worrying too much about that!

In fact, the new intelligence has to take quite a lot into account. After choosing a destination 'square', each mobile alien checks to see that it is unoccupied by MONITOR and other traps and aliens (it's safer to shoot at it than collide with it!), as well as more solid objects like walls. This prevents overlapping sprites (it's not much good having 16 sprites on screen if most are sitting on top of each other. Er, perhaps I'd better rephrase that!) This not only helps the multiplexor but also allows more enemy forces to surround the player, rather than ganging up on each other.

Thursday 22nd December

Continuing with alien movement patterns, things are really beginning to take shape. When travelling down a corridor, the player has to take into account the placement of any traps and mobiles to determine the best route. Avoiding destruction is becoming more thought provoking and less iconoclastic (There, I've wanted to use that word all year!) The feel is just as I wanted – a hybrid of shoot 'em up and board game. You can stop and consider the current positions of the enemy, or just plough in there with your fingers crossed! This can prove tricky with certain makes of joystick – it may be best to consult you doctor!

Friday 23rd December

What! Still working away? But it's nearly Christmas! And you must remember that programmers don't get paid holidays. Come to that, they don't get paid very often at all! With that sobering thought it's time to press on regardless. By the way, I'd love to know why the ZZAP! crew keep referring to me as the 'Axeman'. Perhaps it's because my remarks are so blunt. Then again perhaps not.

Since my 'baddies' are now more clever 'baddies', I can now prepare for some strategic merriment – alien bullets are going to be deadly to other aliens! This should allow some interesting gameplay to develop, as the security installations are gently persuaded to destroy each other in crossfire.

Saturday 24th December

I'll just . . . NO! Stop dragging me away from the computer. I MUST write my diary. Today I . . . AAAGH!! Please! NO! . . .

(Later) I have promised not to turn the computer on again until after Christmas, or risk not getting any presents at all. See you next year – unless I can sneak away while everyone else has fallen asleep on Christmas Day. I'll wait until the snoring starts and then . . .

Monday 2nd January

Well, that was quick wasn't it? Another year has started since the last diary entry. Sorry, I'm afraid I was chained to the comfy chair on Christmas Day. How many of YOU were programming then?

The festive season seemed as usual to provide a pitched ratings battle between the four TV channels, with each side tweaking its scheduled programme starting times so that watching 'The Empire Strikes Back' would always mean missing the start of something else good on the other side. Even those lucky enough to have a video recorder are now foiled by the 'three good films at once' ploy. It must take months to organise mayhem on such a vast scale – and all so that in January the executives can see which channel ended up with biggest ratings in the lucky dip!

My prize for the 'turkey' of yuletide film viewing must be award to Walt Disney's 'Black Hole'. How many times did YOU spot the strings suspending that ridiculous robot? (And his battered chum!) As for the inter-robot aggression and rivalry, and their philosophical utterings – perhaps someone should have insisted that those involved read a little Isaac Asimov. He is, after all, the definitive author of INTELLIGENT robot stories, and the oft quoted Three Laws of Robotics. At least the spate of second rate Science Fiction films that poured out after the success of 'Star Wars' proved that it is only GOOD science fiction that makes real money at the box office. People vote with their wallets (and I don't mean bribing election officials!)

Tuesday 3rd January

Time to stock up with food after the holiday break, and examine the aftermath of Christmas on the software shelves. Following my earlier comments, I've definitely decided that Activision must have an INCREDIBLE sales force – W.H. Smiths are now sporting **STAR RAIDERS II** in a prominent position! (but with the usual amount of dust) Boots as usual have a range of special budget bargains, although their stock of **RANARAMA** at £2.99 does seem to be bottomless. How many copies have you bought? And after the festive furore has died down, how many of you are now the sad possessors of a duff arcade conversion?

Wednesday 4th January

Time to knock the bugs out of the new intelligence routines, and make the security systems just that little bit more DANGEROUS! After a week off, I'm just itching to get the next modules into place (or maybe I'm just itching?) Cheerio.

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CoR Blimey!

THE BUDGET BIT!

New looks abound once again, folks, as we enter the realm of the cheapo-games! In this section we will attempt to give a concise yet informative view of the month's budget releases. So without further ado, take it away Kati, Maff and Gordo!

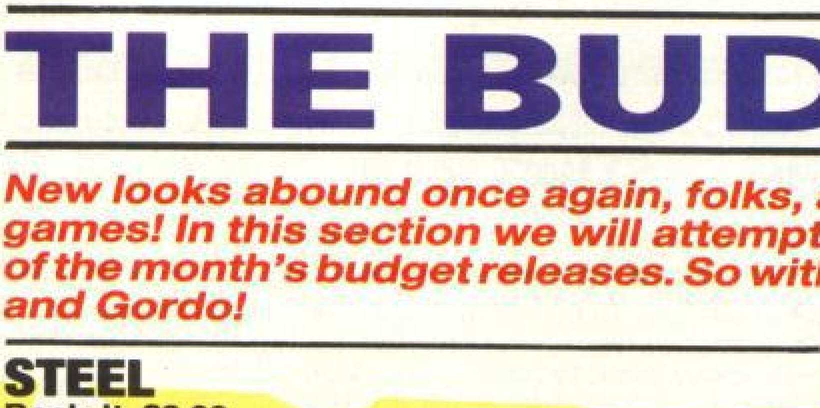
STEEL
Rack-It, £2.99
Reviewer: Maff

Hot on the heels of their recent Silver Medal success, the authors of the excellent *Slayer* have come up with *Steel*. The action takes place in a huge complex of corridors (ideal for mapping) filled with a myriad of nasty robots hovering around VINCent style (you have seen *The Black Hole* haven't you?). You must traverse the corridors moving power units and operating signals via a sub-game rather like the last stage of *Phoenix*.

The graphics in *Steel* are excellent, with a whole host of colourful and metallic backdrops. The gameplay is rather strange, though, but it's fast and compelling. I found myself coming back for another thrash every now and then. Not quite as good as *Slayer*, but still a good game.

OVERALL 82%





CAMELOT WARRIORS
Mastertronic, £1.99
Reviewer: Kati

Just when you thought it was safe to go back in the cupboard, it looks like there are a couple of things you forgot to do. That little matter of restoring four missing elements to their guardians and releasing the world from the power of evil, for example. Yeah – *that*.

Basically, it's a case of moving about a very pretty platform environment of lakes, caverns and woods, looking for the four objects and avoiding some pretty nasty thingies – hippos, poisonous plants and walking shrubs (eek!).

OK so it's old-fashioned (no in-game music either) but that wouldn't stop it being good, clean, whiter than white fun. Trouble is, it's just a teeny tadette too difficult. One false step, the hippo walks into your foot and, hey presto, you're Camelot sauerkraut. Dead annoying. So, unless you like your platforms pretty pervy this may not be the one for you.

OVERALL 50%

GHOST HUNTERS
Code Masters, £2.99
Reviewer: Maff

Dum-dum-diddley-dum-dum-dum-dum – who you gonna call? *GHOST HUNTERS!* All right, maybe not. This game from those cheapo giants at Code Masters has you running around in a haunted mansion attempting to rescue your kidnapped brother. All manner of ghostly hazards are in your way, some of which can be zapped with your special weapon (oo-er), but leave them too long and your lifeforce drains away.

I can't say that I understand the Code Masters marketing philosophy. I mean, at £1.99 *Ghost Hunters* would have been remarkably average, but at £2.99 it's out of its range, and the poor quality is compounded. The gameplay is pretty naff due to the frustratingly tricky control method, with the gun-sight whizzing all over the shop. Only one for dedicated Darling fans, I'm afraid.

OVERALL 35%



PASTEMAN PAT

Silverbird, £1.99
Reviewer: Maff

Ooh, the dirty doings of business competition, eh? Pat, the finest bill sticker in town, is having a hard time keeping his work up to scratch, since his rival, Nasty Norville, is going around messing his posters up. Pat must use his brush, ladder and sloppy paste to slide the panels back into place. However, Norville and his henchmen throw things at Pat to try and get him to fall off the ladder and put a stop to his work.

The idea of a sliding-block puzzle game is hardly original, and *Pasteman Pat* is one of the worst I've ever played. The viewing area is very small, the control poor, the graphics confusing and the gameplay frustrating. Not much for puzzle fans here, I'm afraid. My advice is to go for *Zenji*, or save your money for *Tetris.*

OVERALL 19%





SUPER STUNT MAN

Code Masters, £2.99
Reviewer: Maff

Relive the days of Hollywood an' all vat an' everyfin' . . . that's the prospect promised by Code Masters' latest 'release'. The action in *Super Stunt Man* takes place over a vertically scrolling landscape with you driving a mega-speedy stunt car. Along the route you must negotiate your way over jumps, through rocks and around pools, all the while dodging other cars. The director of the film is an impatient man, however, and only allows you three takes – so you'd better get your 'act' together. Haw, haw! *(Shut up, Maff – Gordo).*

How can I put my opinion on this game simply? I know . . . it's RUBBISH! The graphics are naff, the sound weak and the gameplay boring. What more can be wrong? Well, there's the bad control method, the delays . . . *etc etc.* A poor release even at three quid. AVOID!

OVERALL 21%

GRIBBLY'S SPECIAL DAY OUT

Rack-It, £2.99 (Rerelease)
Reviewer: Maff

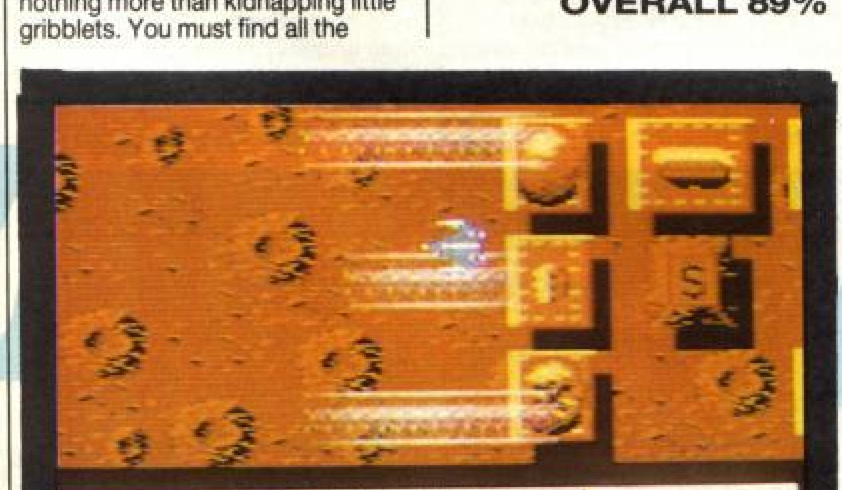


Long counted as a classic 64 game, Andy Braybrook's cute 'n' cuddly masterpiece is now available at a thoroughly reasonable price. For those five people unfamiliar with the plot of the game, here's a brief rundown . . .

Gribbly is a one-footed character that lives on the planet Blabgo. Also on the planet lives Seon, the evil mutant Blabgorian, who likes nothing more than kidnapping little gribblets. You must find all the gribblets and hide them in a cave before Seon can take them.

Gribbly's Day Out has lost none of its charm since its release in mid-1985 and now that the scroll routines have been polished up a bit, it even keeps up with today's programming standards. Even if you've got the original, buy this anyway. Only joking. Harhar! *(Shut up again, Maff – Gordo).*

OVERALL 89%



TERRAFIGHTER

Zeppelin, £1.99
Reviewer: Maff

Terrafighter is a horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up (original, eh?), consisting of three stages. The first stage requires you to destroy eight reactors whilst dodging alien craft, the second contains wave after wave of enemy craft to be destroyed and the third stage pits you against the alien command ship – and yep, you've got to kill that as well.

The graphics and sound of *Terrafighter* are of the typical budget shoot 'em up standard and there isn't much in the way of original gameplay, but nonetheless it's still a fair enough blast. Sometimes the control feels a little odd, making playing difficult, but if you can live with this and you're nearly skint then it's worth a look.

OVERALL 63%

ZAMZARA

Rack-It, £2.99 cassette

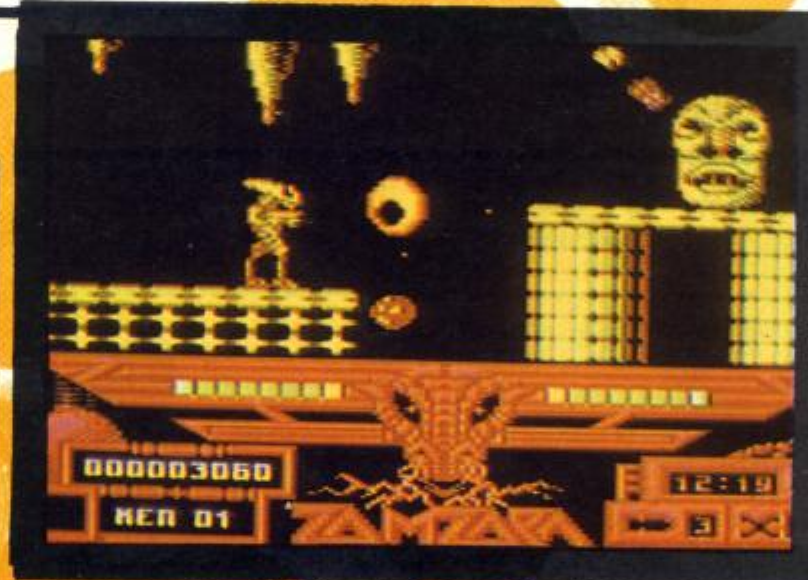
It was yer average day on yer average alien fighter base. The sun burned green in the purple sky and the astra-terrestrial army was going through its daily nose-picking ritual when a blazing fighter plummetted from the sky. The pilot was still alive – but she looked a mess. A real mess. All she could do was mutter one word – Zamzara.

OK slime-face, here comes the mega-question. Are you alien enough to brave the enemy-infested planet Zamzara yourself? 256 scrolling screens inhabited by belching missile pods and the sort of monsters you'd rather get eaten by than have to look at? With only a machine gun and a limited supply of mega-weapons to your name?

Whaddya mean you can't, you've got to feed your pet okapi? Get back to your ship, get wise, get cool, GET GOING.



▲ Fancy some fried prawns, Dennis?



▲ That ugly head is about to make alien soup out of you



There I was thinking what a shame it was that you don't seem to see that many good budget games anymore (and other equally depressing things) when Zamzara comes along and ruins my theory. The animation on some of the aliens is dead good and the main sprite looks exactly like the lizard hero in the film Enemy Mine. Some of the special weapons are really unusual and the gameplay throughout is brilliantly designed. If you've got three quid spare, spend it on this – it's one of the best budget games around at the mo.



Cor blimey, take a look at those graphics! Not arf bad for a cheapo budget game, huh? What about the rest of it then? Does the gameplay match up to the mega-cool alien image? Yep, it most certainly does. The scrolling's dead smooth, there are loadsa different weapons, enough aliens to keep your bazooka smoking till next Sunday and the action's everso tough. Get this or spend the three quid on having your head examined.

PRESENTATION 65%
Game over tune and highscore table. Well, what more do you want?

GRAPHICS 80%
Slick 'n' trendy with animated alien sprites.

SOUND 78%
Haunting title tune, echoing in-game effects.

HOOKABILITY 93%
Immediately addictive.

LASTABILITY 92%
It gets pretty tough so you'll need to keep in practice.

OVERALL 91%
Another dead good game from Rack-It.

MASTER BLASTER

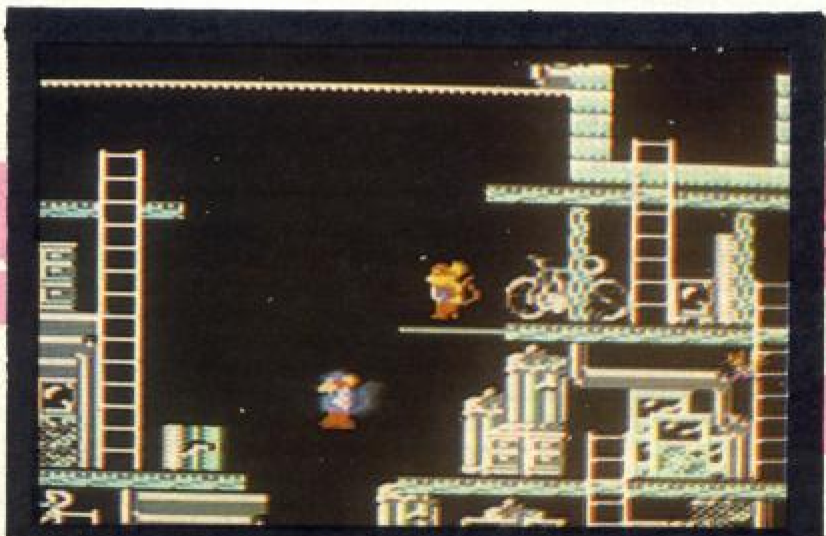
Zeppelin, £1.99
Reviewer: Maff

This game gets no marks for originality, as it's extremely similar to a certain game featuring rotating ships and asteroids that I could mention. No, I didn't say that, not me, never in the world. Okay, I did. The plot places you in the role of a defender who must clear the solar system of bothersome asteroids – the gameplay, however, consists of whirling about the screen blasting rocks to bits. If you're *really* good then you get to dock with the mother ship. Er . . . and that's about it really.

The graphics in *Master Blaster* are rather weak, but the major failing is the contrived and repetitive gameplay. Zeppelin for once seem to have leapt on the 'current license trend' bandwagon, and it just hasn't worked. A poor release for a company with such high standards.

OVERALL 37%





PETER PACKRAT

Silverbird, £1.99
Reviewer: Kati

Remember the *Peter Packrat* arcade machine? Nope, nor do I – but believe it or not there was one. Funny old world, eh?

Right – so you've heard of a pack and you've heard of a rat. Come on then, what's a packrat?

Er . . . yeah well, whatever it is, it likes collecting things. Climbing down ladders, sliding down walls, squeezing through tubes, negotiating sticky spiderwebs, trampolining, avoiding baddies and swimming to collect things, to be exact. If he makes it back to his house with all the right objects from a level, he's a hero. If not, he's . . . well, he's not.

I have to admit this doesn't look like much – the monotone graphics aren't exactly the sort to bowl you over and the idea's hardly original – but the gameplay itself is a lorra lorra fun. No frills, no fancy bits with knobs on, just good, plain fun. Check it out.

OVERALL 76% ▶

ROCK 'N' BOLT

Ricochet, £1.99 (Rerelease)
Reviewer: Gordon

Louie the construction worker is in a bit of a mess – he's got 100 levels of girders to bolt down, each level a maze of moving steel and tricky walkways. For every girder he bolts down, he's given some money. If he has to *un*-bolt a girder, more cash is deducted from him than he was awarded – so screw carefully, as they say where I come from.

It's not the hardest puzzle game ever released – the first few levels are a bit of a doddle – but it'll definitely keep you interested, because there are so many different aspects. Quick thinking and a combination of strategy and a logical approach are needed, especially on the later levels, where the layouts run over several complex screens.

It didn't get all that good a reception from ZZAP! first time round, but I really enjoyed it. At this price, it's well worth checking out.

OVERALL 89%





SUPER HERO

Code Masters, £2.99
Reviewer: Gordon

I thought that *Super Hero* would have people running round in costumes like Superman or Batman, but NO! The Super Hero in this case is more along the lines of Greek mythology – you know, them that the gods bestow all them gifts on. The gods have a game in which a hero is selected to take part: he must solve a number of puzzles set in a large labyrinth. You take the part of the hero: the task is daunting but there may be items which help you on your way.

The screenshots on the packaging didn't look too bad, so I was expecting a fair isometric puzzle game. Instead what I found was a dull *Knight Lore* clone with mediocre sound, gameplay and graphics. The main character doesn't look much like a hero, more like someone who has had a heavy weight dropped on their head! I can think of a good number of exploration games I'd rather play than this – but it might suit you.

OVERALL 43%

JOCKY WILSON'S DARTS CHALLENGE

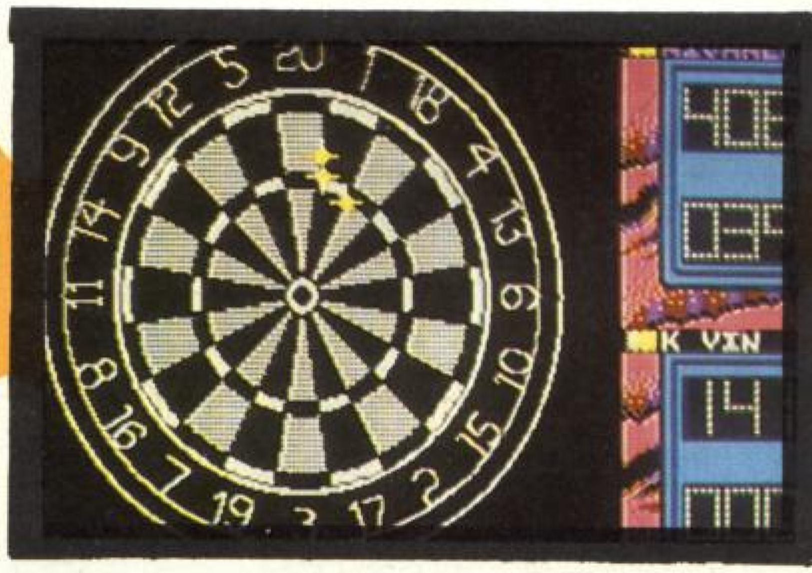
Zeppelin, £2.99
Reviewer: Kati

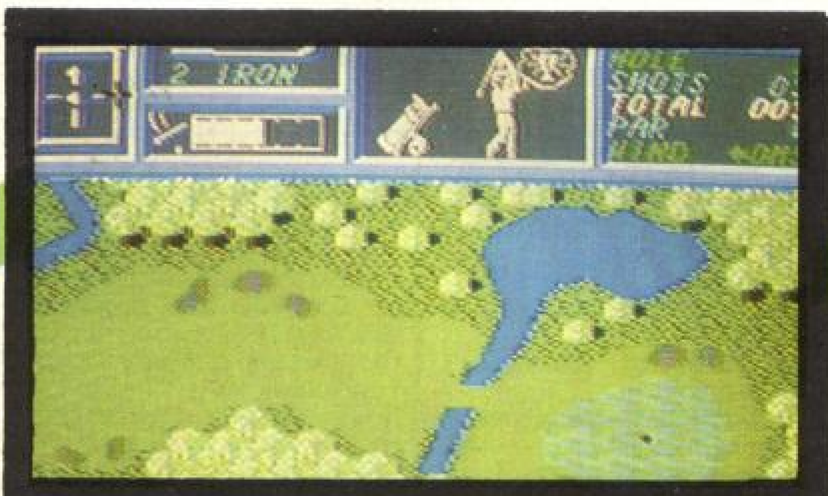
A night at the boozer playing darts and wishing I was Jocky Wilson isn't exactly number one on my list of favourite pastimes (I hate those shirts for a start) but if it's yours, at least you can't hit your mates in the eye with a dart when you're playing this.

There are tournament, round the clock (hit the numbers from 1-20 in sequence) and head to head options and you can play with up to three friends. A cursor sort of hovers over the board and it's up to you to place it and shoot before it moves off again – easy? Er . . . no.

Presentation's not bad (not much sound though) and the whole thing's really quite well designed – if you like that sort of thing. I'm not into darts so I can take it or leave it, but a real fan could do a lot worse than get his chubby hands round this. Nice game, shame about the shirts . . .

OVERALL 73%





GOLF MASTER

Rack–It, £2.99
Reviewer: Kati

No matter how hard I try, one little word keeps worming its wriggly way into the sludgy mess right at the back of my mind. And that word is (wait for it) *Leaderboard*!

Golf Master isn't such a bad little game but it don't even come close to the best golf sim ever. It's certainly different, though. You pick your club and set up the strength and direction of your shot *before* the ball starts moving so there's really very little skill involved. Just set your controls, press the button and 18 holes later you're a superstar (or maybe not).

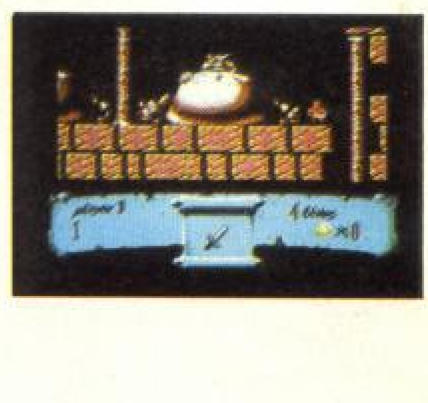
OK, so it's quite fun for a while but in the long run *Golf Master* just doesn't have enough complexity to last. If you haven't already got *Leaderboard* (where have you been?) get that for £2.99 instead.

OVERALL 45%

tyger! tyger!







Commodore 64 screen shots

Coming soon on . . .

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Take up your sword Lance Tyger and prepare for a deadly sortie into the bottomless depths of the Earth.

Marauding aardvarks and monstrous beasts of every shape and size crouch in dismal shadow, thoughts of death riddle their evil minds.

To survive in this world of dark and fear you must kill without mercy — or you yourself shall feel the tear of tooth and claw.

TYGER TYGER . . .
. . . Definitely not for the faint of heart!

FIREBIRD

A LEGEND IN GAMES SOFTWARE

Telecomsoft, First Floor, 64-76 New Oxford St, London WC1A 1PS.

CLASSIC COMPUTER Cock Ups

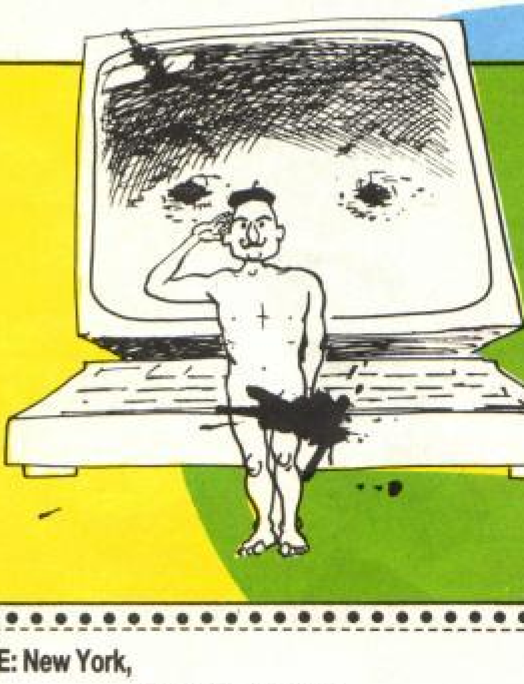
PART FIVE

DATELINE: City of London, England, November 1988

Stockbrokers and merchant bankers with time on their hands think they are pretty smart. Instead of wheeling and dealing on the stock Exchange, they circulate free pirate copies of Activision's yuppie game 'Leisure Suit Larry', and play it on their office computers during working hours. Unfortunately for them, the pirate copies contain a virus which eats up hard disks and squits on data. Fleet Street reports that the smart-arses are too afraid to use their terminals in case they wipe millions of shares off the money market. This may explain the pathetic state of the Chancellor's economic policies.

DATELINE: Paris, France, September 1968

Over 100 bemused lunch-hour shoppers gather round a naked young man holding a sign that reads 'computers are obscene' outside the IBM building. He tells the police doctor that computers are spying into our souls, and they must be stopped. After several hours' discussion, the medic agrees with him and lets him go!



DATELINE: Chicago, USA, 1974

Six years after returning home from Vietnam with an honourable discharge, ex-marine Tom Harper is arrested in illinois for being a deserter. The FBI computer has been fed the wrong data, but that doesn't stop him getting beaten up. After he manages to get bailed out, Harper is arrested a further three times on the same charge, because nobody gives the order to change his computer file.

DATELINE: Published Information, USA, 1979

General Sir John Hackett, barmy futurologist and author of 'The Third World War', lets slip a wee gem concerning the US ban on exporting computer systems to the Soviet Union. Alarmed that the Russians have got hold of a computerised aiming system that is better than half of NATO's anti-aircraft guns, it tracks down the source of the leak to the Soviet Military Attache in Washington. The enterprising chap has hijacked the games chip from a coin-op 'Space Invaders' machine.



DATELINE: New York, USA, March 1980

Rex Red is a well-known television personality, and he orders a new king size bed to go with his ego. The Manhattan department store assures him that their despatch computer will take care of everything. Rex Reed dumps his old bed and sleeps on the floor.

Three months pass by, then the bed arrives, minus screws, slats and legs. After fifteen weeks, Reed goes back to the store to buy some sheets. He is arrested. When asked why, the store detective says 'For using a stolen credit card. Rex Reed is dead.' Eventually Reed proves that he is still alive, and returns home to find removal men waiting to reclaim his bed. Time magazine reports the store manager as saying 'our computer believes that is customer is dead, we cannot change this, and as the order has not been completed we are reclaiming our goods.'

DATELINE: Saint Louis, USA, 1977

The managing editor of the St. Louis Post-Dispatch is refused insurance for his car. He takes the insurance company data bank to court for having him misfiled as 'a hippie with a long beard, a drug user and a bad father to his children.' The computer is found guilty of character assassination, but it costs the poor pillar of society $4,000 in legal fees and a stomach ulcer to prove it.

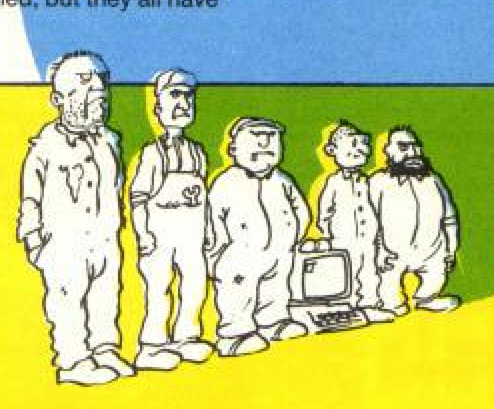
DATELINE: Johannesburg, South Africa, December 1988

Liberty Life Insurance installs computer controlled steel security doors to protect its staff. Twenty-three year old Renata Espach is handing a document to an employee when the doors decide to go into emergency mode and crush her to death. The document is for a life insurance policy.

DATELINE: Washington,

USA, December 1967

Harvey Matusow investigates a spectacular case of attempted murder. A brand new buick limo has been hurled into space and crashed onto the pavement four floors below nearly assassinating a local bank manager. The suspects are lined up and questioned, but they all have solid alibis. The guilty party is found to be an overworked computer, whose push-button mechanism has been jammed open by a full coin-box. It decided that the only empty parking space was the nearest empty lift shaft!



DATELINE: New York,

USA, 1981

26 year-old Mary Kennedy of Long 'sland is hassled for 18 months by agents of the U.S. Customs Service, and is stripped naked to be searched inside and out every time she passes through the airport. The Customs computer has her name down as an international drug smuggler. Mary Kennedy prefers to be known as Sister Bernadette – she is a nun.

DATELINE: Kopenhavn,

Denmark, April 1979

The first computerised 'superloos' are installed for the convenience of the hygiene-conscious Danes. After accepting donations of coins and bodily wastes, the automatic bogs clean out the poop-pit, disinfect the toilet seat, and spray the walls and floor. Unfortunately, after ten days of trouble-free operation they forget to let out the public before cleaning up. Maybe this could have been forecast from the public health installation's acronym: K.R.A.P.



DATELINE: Edinburgh,

Scotland, August 1985

An artificial intelligence machine, nicknamed Cocky, is set up near the Panopticum during the Edinburgh Festival, and members of the public are invited to ask it simple mathematical and logical questions. A technophobe swaggers up to the keyboard and types in 'what is my name?' As the operator has forgotten to exchange the working disc for the demo disc, the computer comes up with the appropriate response, 'F*** OFF JOCK'.

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ROBOCOP

Ocean, C64 £9.95 cassette, £14.95 disk

The time is the early 21st century. Crime throughout Old Detroit has soared to extraordinary heights, necessitating the takeover of the Police Department by OmniConsumer Products (OCP), allowing the company to place new peace-keeping robot systems in the streets. One of these systems is the ED-209 unit, a large bipedal robot with awesome firepower. The droid is set to take over the law enforcement of the city and eventually enter military service.

Dick Jones – the head of the project – is ready to show off the progress of the ED-209 and sets up a board meeting accordingly. Unfortunately, the prototype proves its unreliability by accidentally killing an OCP executive at the meeting. Fortunately, Bob Morton, another executive has a backup – the *Robocop* program. Soon a 'volunteer' is found in the form of the late Alex Murphy, recently killed 'in the line of duty' . . . in other words, set up.

Within three months, Murphy is back on the streets as Robocop with his three 'Prime Directives':

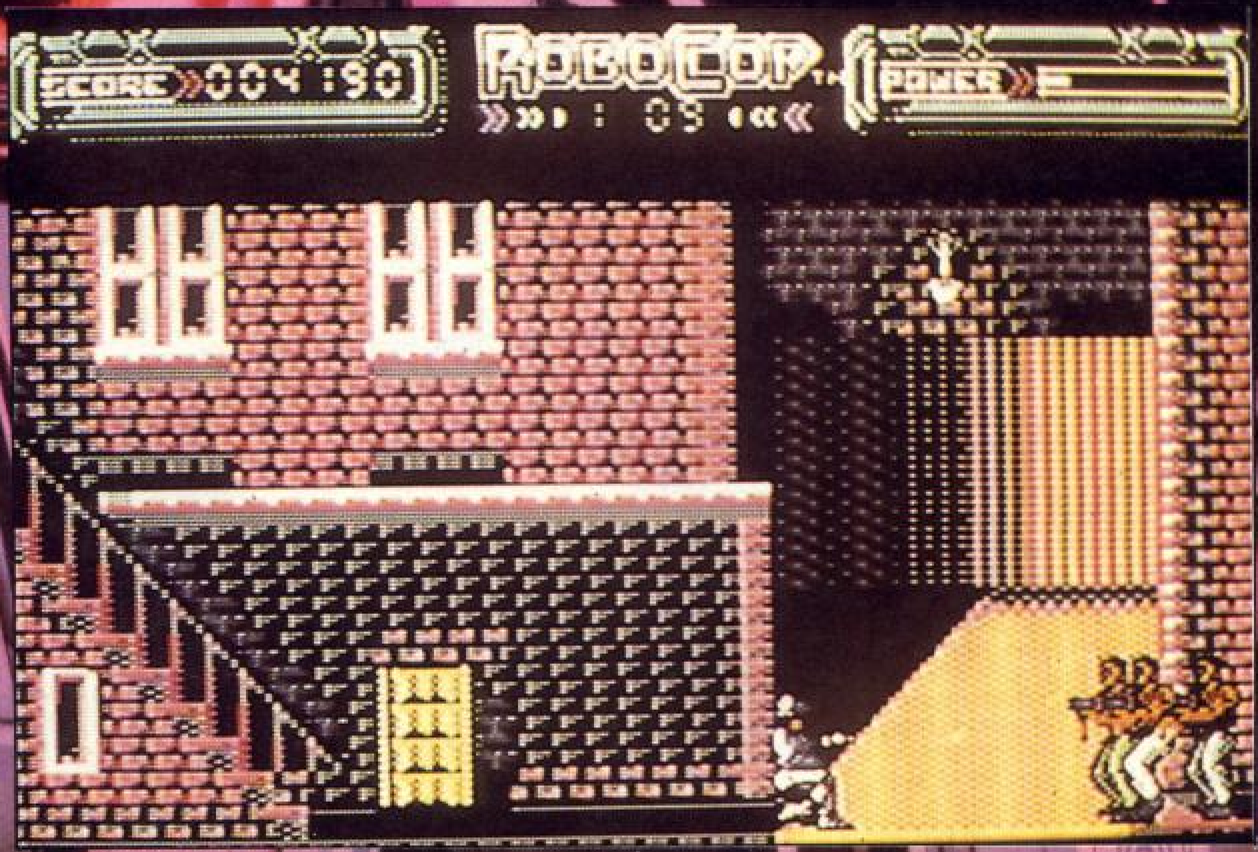
1 – Serve the public trust
2 – Protect the innocent
3 – Uphold the law

Soon enough he is back in action, blasting criminals in downtown Old Detroit. After dispatching a crim who is holding a woman hostage, Murphy takes out a motorcyclist who for some reason stirs some memories . . .

Murphy manages to match up the identity of the biker with a gang-member responsible for a series of cop killings. This proves too much, and he sets off to avenge his 'death'.

His quest reveals connection with OCP he never thought possible, but problems arise when a certain part of his programming known as Directive 4 makes it impossible for him to carry out his law duties, so he must fight his way through and bring the people to justice, either via the law, or his own form of punishment.

Basically, there's lots of shooting, and some icons, like this:



▲ Stay out of trouble, or Mr Robocop will slap your wrists – and he's *tough*

PICK-UP ICONS



Extra Energy – baby food, yum!

Armour-piercing bullets – baddies drop like flies.

High-impact shells – loads of baddies drop like flies with one shot.

Spray bullets – baddies drop like flies all over the shop!



Ocean seem to have got the knack for recapturing the atmosphere of the original source for their licensed products, from Platoon, through Operation Wolf and now Robocop. The whole feel of the game is a gloomy world filled with deadbeat criminals and killers, with your own character as a nicely futuristic looking figure made of shining metal (ooh, all rather poetic dontcha think?). It's a little bit on the difficult side (as Ocean games often are) but this doesn't damage the playability at all, it just makes you want to beat the *∞♦± out of the baddies just that little bit more. As the saying goes, 'I'd buy that for a dollar!'



Expectations ran high for this game, as Robocop is one of my favourite films, but when I heard that Ocean weren't going to convert the arcade game directly I thought 'Ooh, that's a bit odd'. Luckily, the decision has paid off – Robocop the game is grrrreat (to pinch a phrase). The main sprite is very effective, looking very metallic and *'ard*, but the backgrounds are rather disappointing on the whole, consisting of a few blocks to represent walls. They do get better though, as on level three they're rather good. The sound on the other hand is pretty naff all the way through – repetitive tunes and weedy effects – and is soon annoying. Still, never mind that, the game's really good, so play it *today!*

amiga

A 16-bit version of this brilliant game is expected any day now; the game's the same, but the grafix should be nothing short of amazing. Price? £24.99.

update

PRESENTATION 78%
Good on the whole, but there are a few annoying control quirks and delays.

GRAPHICS 81%
Good sprites and animation, but some of the backgrounds are a little bland.

SOUND 73%
Sombre title tune, but weedy in-game music and effects.

HOOKABILITY 91%
Good blasting fun from the outset.

LASTABILITY 88%
It's tough, but it'll keep you hooked – not bog you off.

OVERALL 89%
An atmospheric interpretation of a great theme.

ZAK McKRACKEN AND THE ALIEN MINDBENDERS™

Lucasfilm/US Gold, C64 £14.99 disk; Amiga £24.99

●Starring the two-headed squirrel and Ken D Fish's younger brother, Sushi Fish

Go on then, do it – name a fate worse than death. Being stampeded by a herd of sheep in green wellies? Being forced into close hair-to-hair contact with Gordon Houghton's blubber belly (aaargh! I can't stand it!!)? Swallowing ten gallons of cod liver oil in one go without breathing, being forced to listen to a bloke screeching his ten foot nails down a blackboard for FIVE DAYS? Pretty bad, eh?

Ha! Still not as bad as the fate Zak McKracken faces. Nope, not half as bad as that, not a tiny weeny bit as bad as that. I mean, if you were just an average, ordinary newspaper journalist trying to make a crust reporting about two-headed squirrels and the like, you'd be pretty horrified if you found out that nasty bald-headed aliens were trying to invade the world. Shock, horror an' all that and everyfin'. And how are they trying to invade it? They're slowly sapping everybody's intelligence so that they end up as stupid as Maff . . . er . . . I mean as *very stupid people* in the end.

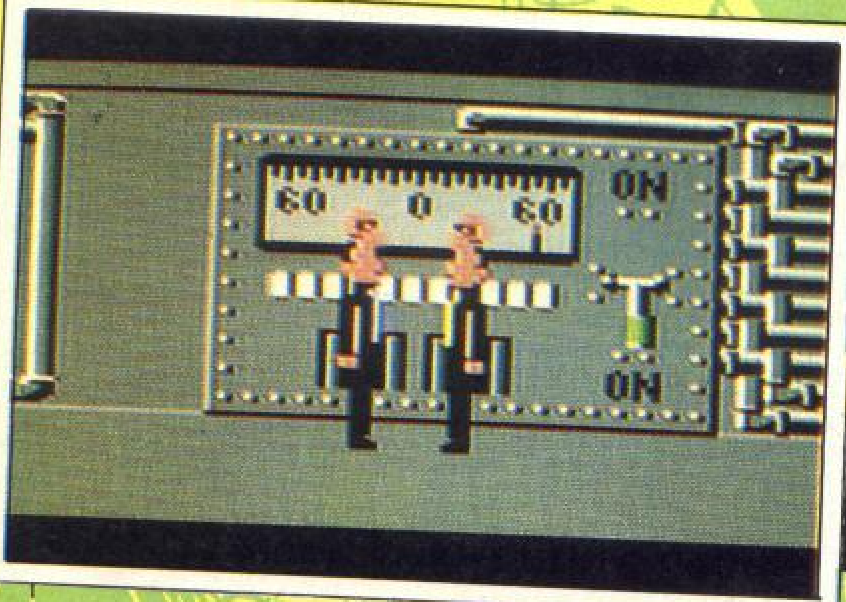
Now Zak's clever and he wants to stay that way, so he and (eventually) his three companions, Annie, Leslie and Melissa try to hit on a way to save the world. Cue very loud fanfare, MGM music, hymns and songs.

Zak's saga is played out pretty



▲ Now what would *you* do to wake up a sleepy bus-driver? Take a look in your inventory (and maybe the dictionary), and you'll soon find out! (64)

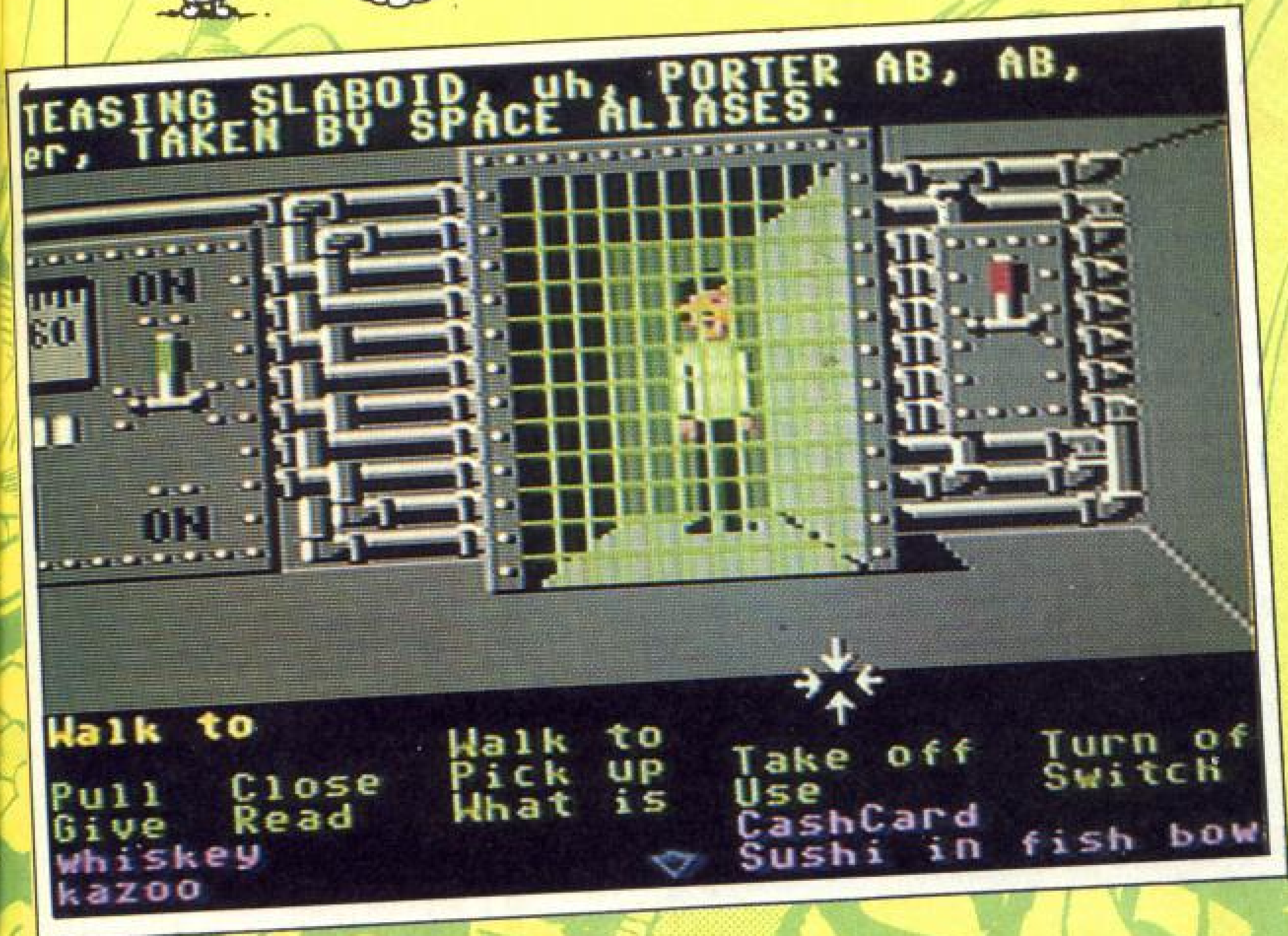
▼ Oh dear – it's those scheming egg-headed aliens again (Amiga)





Well, I thought *Maniac Mansion* was brill and I think that this is even briller . . . It might take a bit of time to get into but once you've sussed the input method and found a couple of really weirdo objects, you're most definitely hooked. There isn't all that much sound, but the controls are really smooth on both versions and the gameplay is even better. In fact, right from the bizarre beginning to the eccentric ending, Zak is compelling, enthralling and utterly hilarious – simply the best action/adventure combo I've seen. If you've got a disk drive (any size) keep bothering your friendly software dealer until he'll let you buy it. Pity it's only on disk, though.





▲ Oh dear, it looks like Brown Trousers time for Zak (64)

much in the style of Lucasfilm's other joystick operated adventure game – *Maniac Mansion.* The action of Zak and his mates is controlled using cursor, joystick and a menu system of possible commands and displayed a bit like a film in the top half of the screen. Basically, you move the cursor over verbs like WALK TO and USE and then move it over the appropriate object either on the screen or in your inventory. Easy eh?

It's up to you and your own little set of brain-cells (whaddya mean you haven't got any?) to direct Zak from his humble first floor flat to Miami, Stonehenge, Mexico, Seattle and finally . . . wait for it, wait for it . . . MARS. Wooh!

Meantime, Zak can go into all sorts of different shops, buy a Groucho Marx disguise, watch TV, play with his pet sushi (er . . . yeah), get on buses, turn on taps, talk to religious devotees, try to map a Mayan maze in Mexico, look for a space suit (vot no helmet?), collect ancient artefacts, mess about with holographic projectors, explore secret chambers, try to survive an encounter with a shark and play the kazoo to his heart's content (phew! that was a long sentence and that's only about half the things you can do). It might not always do any good but anything's worth a try when the future of the world's at stake. Well it is, innit?

Every now and again the action's interrupted by cut-scenes. Whassemthen? Little cinematic scenarios designed to let you know what's going on, that's what. You don't control these – you just sit quietly with your legs crossed and watch.

When you finally meet up with one of the other three characters (and remember, you're all gonna be heroes) you can even select SWITCH to become a girly. Far out!

And that's about it really. Well, OK, there's quite a lot more but to find about all that, you'll just have to play it, won't you?

OK, anyone who hasn't got a sense of humour leave the room immediately – this is not the game for you. Everybody else, get this or you'll be missing one of the funniest (chortle, chortle, fnar, fnar, etc) games I've seen in ages. If you want to see a couple of real berks, take a look at some of the cut-scenes - they're dead funny. I reckon it's just as good on both formats, though the sound on the Amiga (there is a bit more than on the 64 but not *that* much) is a bit of a disappointment. Disk access is actually quicker on the 64 version for some reason . . . Look, just forget about all the differences – both versions are brilliant, and whichever machine you own you'd be Zak McKrackers to miss it! *(That joke is RUBBISH, Maff – Ed)*

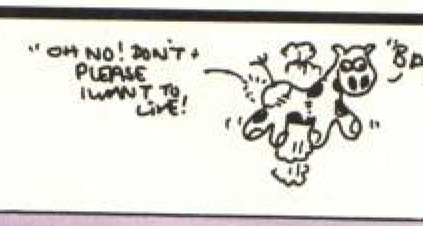




I haven't seen anything as silly as this since . . . erm . . . the last really silly thing I saw, which was Ken D Fish in a penguin suit dancing the samba *(Oi! Less o' that – Ken).* Yes, well he'd had a few too many swigs of pond weed punch that night. Anyway, back to Zak – not only is he pretty silly and a lot of laughs, his game is also incredibly deep and dead involved. Once you get into this, I bet you'll be sitting up night after night playing through it over and over again. It doesn't matter which format you play it on (the sound isn't all that hot on either, but I don't care) you'll love this right from the word go. The story's funny, the plot's really clever and there's loads of thinking involved. What more do you want? A million quid? Well, if you're going to be like that . . . mumble, mumble, mumble . . .



64		amiga
94%	**PRESENTATION**	94%
	Animated intro episode plus loads of user-friendly features like save game option, pause made, bypass a cut scene option and message speed adjustment – wooooh!	
74%	**GRAPHICS**	70%
	The 64 version sports big and colourful sprites but the scrolling jerks a bit. More detail on the Amiga version – still not as much as you might expect.	
36%	**SOUND**	30%
	Apart from the odd atmospheric sound effect, not much really.	
90%	**HOOKABILITY**	90%
	Everything's immediately accessible and there's loads to explore.	
97%	**LASTABILITY**	97%
	There's so much depth to this you just won't be able to stop yourself picking it up again and again and again.	
93%	**OVERALL**	90%
	A real riot of an action/adventure game. Miss it and be reeely square.	

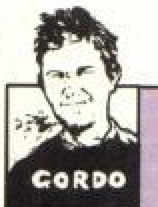


Jet Bike SIMULATOR

Code Masters, C64 £8.99 cassette

Ave yer seen it? 'Ave yer? That ace program *Run The Gauntlet*, you know, the one where they race about on them Jet-Ski things. Ever thought to yourself 'I wouldn't mind having a go at that' but been too nervous of getting wet? Well now you can have a go without going near any water, with *Jet Bike Simulator*.

It's a race between four riders (one or two controlled by human players) over a number of set courses. These range from lake, coastline and dockland courses, through which you steer your craft, negotiating bridges, jumps and gates. Each course must be completed within the time limit to allow access to the next, harder level.



GORDO

I played this on the Spectrum when it was in the £4.99 range (OK, I admit it, I *have* played on of them gadgi Spectrum machines), and as far as I'm concerned, there's been no real advance on the gameplay it offered then. It's just like BMX Simulator **thrown in the bath – graphics OK, sound OK, game OK. Price – way too expensive. If this had been released at Code Masters' new budget price of £2.99, it would have got a mark in the 80s; for almost a tenner it's just about passable. If you've got the money to burn, check it out; if not, forget it.**



MAFF

Code Masters *Plus*? Plus what? Is it the bigger box? Well it's certainly not quality, if this is anything to go by. It's just BMX Simulator **with worse graphics and an extra course tape. One of** BMX Simulator's **good points was its cheap price – but** Jet Bike Simulator **hasn't even got that, which is sad really, as it would have made quite a nice little budget game. Nine pounds for a simplistic racing game is way overboard.**



▲ ***Vrooom! Vrooom! Splash, splash! Goo goo!*** **Yes, it's the baby and the bathwater!** ***(and not Jet Bike Simulator. Sorry)***

PRESENTATION 59%
A few decent options and a choice of courses but the general appearance is shabby.

GRAPHICS 40%
Flat backgrounds and piddly little sprites with far from the best of colour schemes.

SOUND 30%
Disco-ey music, Dalek speech and pathetic effects.

HOOKABILITY 56%
Hardly the most compulsive of race games, but it's quite good fun with a couple of players.

LASTABILITY 31%
The additional courses and expert version may extend its longevity slightly.

OVERALL 39%
Bland and about seven quid too much.

Heroes of the Lance

SSI/US Gold, Amiga £24.99

Guess what, guys? You and seven other adventurers are the only people who can recover the Disks of Mishakal from the dragon's dangerous lair.

Basically, you guide your party through dark passages killing monsters, firing at them and increasing your hit point by hacking more and more nasties into bits.

A special menu lets you pick up and use objects, change your leader, cast spells or save games.



GORDO

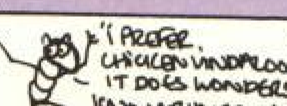
Aye well, this is a very nice box and a very nice manual and all that so you'd think there'd be summat quite good lurking underneath . . . There isn't. Basically, the RPG/action combo just doesn't amount to much. Combat mode is about as easy as kissing a porcupine and the magic isn't interesting enough. Whether you're a fan of RPG or not, you'd be a lot better off putting your £25 under the mattress and giving this a miss.

▼ **A real turkey vindaloo of a game, this is . . .**





Hang on, hang on – is this a D&D simulator or is it just a plain old hack 'em up? Well, if you ask me, it's neither. The scrolling's too jerky and the combat controls are far too awkward for it to be a hot action, 'cut their 'orrible heads off' slash 'em up – and there just aren't enough options to make the D&D interesting. Anyhow, by the time you've managed to select a magic option, you're normally a pretty helpless pile of evil-smelling meaty chunks – bleuch! If you really want a joystick-only RPG, look out for Times Of Lore **instead.**



64

Oops! A 64 version with much the same gameplay is expected soon. It'll set you back £9.99 (cassette) or £14.99 (disk).

update

PRESENTATION 78%
Glossy box and very detailed manual but you have to go through the intro every time you play a new game.

GRAPHICS 60%
Lots of monsters and plain, but atmospheric backdrops – scrolling's slightly jerky though.

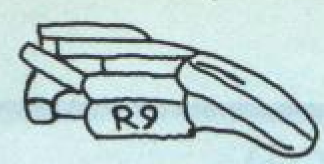
SOUND 39%
Introductory tune, very basic effects.

HOOKABILITY 60%
Looks good but the manual might put hackers and slayers off a bit.

LASTABILITY 37%
There's just not enough to the gameplay to keep you involved.

OVERALL 40%
A disappointingly inaccessible combo of action and RPG.





R-TYPE FIGHTER MODEL 9 WEAPONS

- Reflection Laser
- Anti-Aircraft Laser
- Ground Laser
- Homing Missiles
- Extra Speed
- Shield Orbs

R-TYPE

Electric Dreams/Mediagenic, C64 £9.99 cassette, £14.99 disk

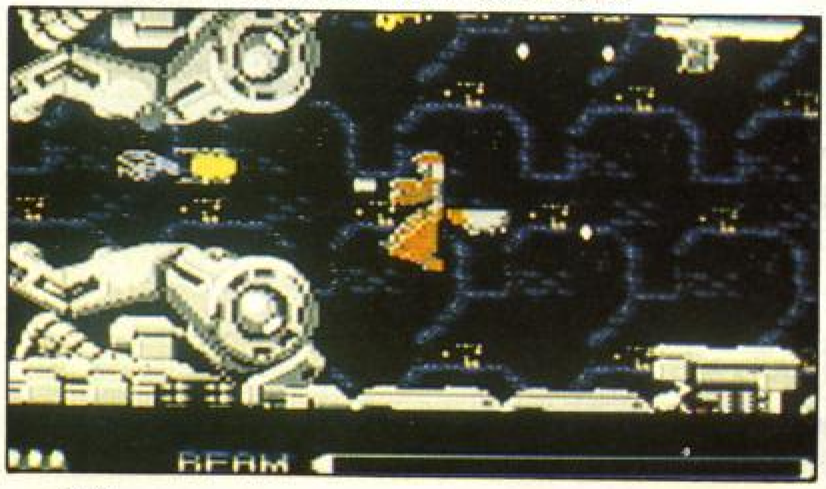
Way off in the far reaches of space, beyond the limits of the Imperial realm, the mysterious planet of Bydo is preparing for war. Large battle cruisers are being constructed, bio-mechanically engineered beings are being created as killing machines and strange guardians are armed to defend the planet from return attacks. Earth is preparing to make sure that nothing becomes of any Bydonian invasion plans. They have created the *R-Type* fighter.

The fighter is currently in its 9th generation, and operating models are few in number. The only chance that Mankind has is to penetrate the Bydonian defences with a single shielded R-9 fighter, so as not to create too much attention.

The R-9 is fitted with a holo-cell armament system, which means that a crystal is fitted to the control system, different combinations of which cause various weapon systems to be projected in front or behind the fighter.

The planet Bydo is split into various zones, exited by destroying a large guardian at the end. To vanquish the Bydonians, all the guardians must be destroyed, causing chaos on the planet.

▼ Cor! Luvly grafix them, ain't they? Yeah, 'Chelle, they are





R-Type **certainly isn't as bad as I expected it to be (that sounds a bit off esn't it?), the scrolling's smooth and the backgrounds fade in and out nicely, for a start. As far as accuracy goes, it does lose a little in translation and some of the features are missing, but on the whole the programmers haven't disgraced themselves and have come up with a decent scrolling shoot 'em up. The only thing that really bugs me is the awful loading system. Even when you die on level one you have to rewind the tape and load it in again. Aaargh! Dedicated** R-Type **fans should look out for it, but other tape owners should be more wary.**

conversion **61** factor



Well, after all the fuss about the similarities between R-Type **and a 'certain other' shoot 'em up game, the original has finally arrived. Unfortunately it's not as good as the 'certain other' game (you know what I'm talking about), particularly the naff loading system, which is particularly annoying seeing as there's no continue play option. On the whole it's not bad, the graphics are OK and it's quite an interesting blast in its own right, but it doesn't capture all the atmosphere of the arcade original. It's probably because the weapons seem a bit weedy compared to the coin-op; the whole thing just lacks that little spark to make it really good.**

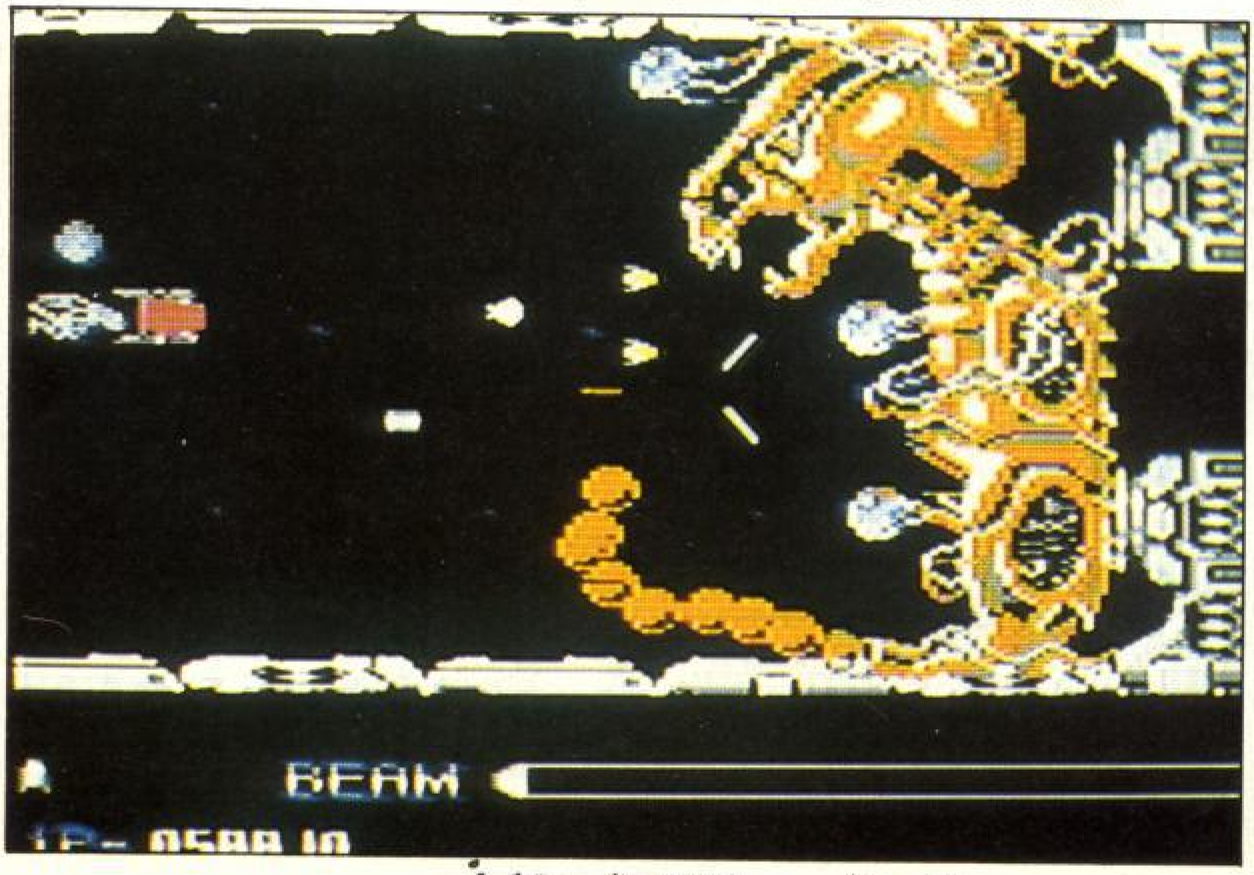


amiga

It's been a long time coming, but the Amiga version of *R-Type* should be out VERY soon. We're talking arcade quality graphics and gameplay – or are we? Check out the review next ish . . .

update

▶ **Is this our type of game? Will we ever stop using that pun? Will *you* defeat that huge end-of-level beastie?**



PRESENTATION 55%
Nice control method which is let down by the disastrous multiload and lack of options.

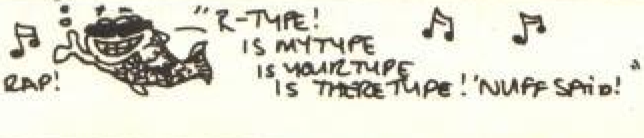
GRAPHICS 78%
Smooth scrolling and decent sprites, but weak in the large aliens department.

SOUND 52%
Annoying tune (which can't be turned off) and crass spot effects.

HOOKABILITY 80%
You want to play at first, just because it's *R-Type*.

LASTABILITY 70%
Reloading the levels becomes annoying after a while, particularly when they're so unrewarding.

OVERALL 72%
Check it out if you're an *R-Type* fan.



Thunder Blade

US Gold, Amiga £24.99

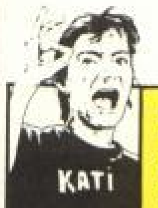
You're mean, you're lean and you've been appointed take that nasty tyrant, the optician General Swindells, out. Leap into your chopper, ease the throttle – and you're off. Wooh!

Your mission takes you through city, desert and river delta (overhead viewpoint first, then head-on 3D). You've got cannons and missiles to help you counter choppers and tanks – but ultimate success depends on your flying skill.

Lucky you got that freebie helicopter in your cornflakes last week, wasn't it?

▼ **It looks nice, – but it's a tough bustard to crack**





Cor blimey, take a look at that 3D! You can't really tell from a still screenshot, but the 3D in this is absolutely brill. Talk about realistic depth and height! Of course, none of that's any good if you haven't got the gameplay, but this definitely has. If I was being picky (OK, OK, I'm being picky) I'd say it was just a bit hard to start off with, but then who cares when you've got something that's nearly as good as the coin op staring you in the face? Not me, mate.



Phew! This is one arcade conversion you're not going to get fed up with in a hurry. Talk about incredibly hair-raising 3D and 'orribly hard levels! This is so reminiscent of the coin op, even the difficulty level is just as tough. OK, they could have done a lot more with the sound, but the fast-paced action, the fact that it's ruddy hard and the brilliant graphics make this great fun to play. If you're a fan of the arcade machine, you won't be able to keep your hands off this conversion.

conversion 87 factor

PRESENTATION 63%
Nice highscore table and intro screens, but the multiload is a bit of a pain.

GRAPHICS 86%
Excellent 3D effect – among the best on the Amiga.

SOUND 41%
Basic flying and shooting noises plus weak, short title tune.

HOOKABILITY 82%
It looks good and, anyway, it's *Thunderblade* so you can't resist a go.

LASTABILITY 80%
It's a tough nut to crack, so you'll be playing for a while.

OVERALL 80%
A bit more tweaking and it would have been just like owning the coin op!

Hellbent

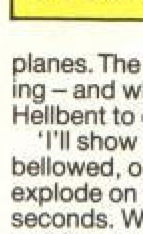
Novagen, Amiga, £19.95

Drak Hellbent was a storyteller. He went around bragging about his exploits, especially the one when he 'totally annihilated the Kraellian usurpers throughout Aldonicha'.

'Ooh, there was millions of 'em son,' he would groan, 'comin' at me from all directions. But I showed 'em who was boss! Oh yessirree!'

He would burble on in this vein for quite a while, until someone had the idea of recreating his adventures on a computer. Eventually the simulation was ready, taken from the pieces of information gleaned from Drak's stories. Unfortunately in each version of the story, everything would look different, so the programmers included them all on separate planes. The time came for the testing – and who better than Drak Hellbent to carry it out?

'I'll show you how it's done,' he bellowed, only for his ship to explode on screen within a few seconds. When last seen he was walking away, shaking and muttering 'Hot, sweet tea' over and over again. The children began to have doubts . . .



Anyone who knows me knows that I'm a sucker for a shoot 'em up. Boom-blast-bang and I'm happy. However, I've got to draw the line somewhere, and Hellbent **appears well below that line. The graphics are OK, everything else is terrible. The sound is extremely infuriating, going *bleepity-beep-beep* for ages (I even heard a few samples from a 64, for godsake) and the gameplay is as much fun as wading through treacle. One of the worst shoot 'em ups I've seen for a long time.**

▼ **Did the legendary creator of *Mercenary* really let this one slip through the net?**





I think the graphics in Hellbent **are brilliant. I also think the sound's brilliant, I think the gameplay's brilliant, and I think I'm lying. We have come to expect more than this from Novagen, especially with games like** Backlash **and** Mercenary **to their credit, but** Hellbent **appears as a very dark blot on their copy-book. Graphics are mediocre, sound is terrible, and gameplay is . . . frustrating. £20 to spare? Buy something else.**

PRESENTATION 31%
A highscore table and a title screen and that's yer lot.

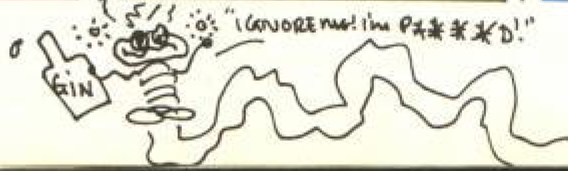
GRAPHICS 60%
A nice metallic look on some of the building shading and some interesting use of colour.

SOUND 11%
It's in tune – barely.

HOOKABILITY 29%
When we first played it we thought 'what the hell's this?'.

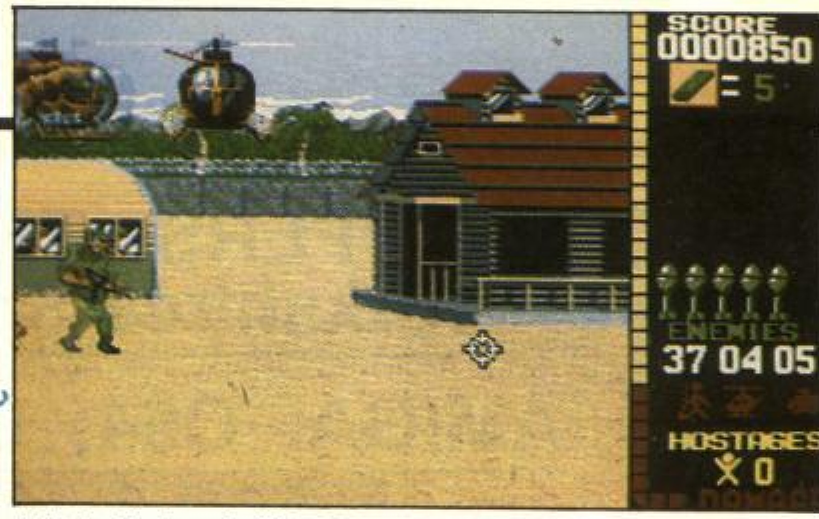
LASTABILITY 13%
Most of us never played it again!

OVERALL 20%
A *perfect* example of how not to produce a shoot 'em up.



ZZAP! 64/AMIGA

OPERATION W·O·L·F



▲ 'Eat hot lead, sucker!' 'Only if you say pretty please'

Ocean, Amiga £24.95

You've heard the phrase haven't you? 'Have machine gun, will shoot the hell out of things'. No? Oh well, suit yourself . . .

In *Operation Wolf* that's exactly what you must do. Rebel troops have set up a dedicated fighting force spread over the continent, ready to spread their forces by way of invasion of your homeland *(ooh, the horror!)*. It's up to you to put a stop to it (well, that's what you joined the army for isn't it?).

Armed with an Uzi sub-machine gun, you must fight your way through six stages of enemy filled territories, beginning with the communications camp, which must be shut down in order to confuse all future enemy movement. To do this however, you must wipe out the enemy inhabitants, as they won't just sit and watch as you plant explosives all over the place! Next comes the jungle, with armoured cars and snipers galore, leading onto other stages such as the village, concentration camp and airport.

No problem eh? Well . . . the thing is . . . *you're all alone.* There's no backup. You have to survive on what ammunition you have along with any magazines and rockets you can pick up on the



Well I must say I'm disappointed. After the brilliant 64 version of Operation Wolf **I was expecting great things of the Amiga version. What I wasn't expecting was one of the worst Amiga multiloads I've ever seen. I mean disk swapping? On an *arcade* game? Aaaargh! The actual game sections aren't that great, either; sure the graphics are nice and the sound is realistic, but what difference does it make when the gameplay's a bit on the boring side? Maybe I'd have been playing longer if it didn't take so long to get to the game sections (it was actually quicker to reset the machine and start again rather than wait to get through the highscore table). Should have been a helluva lot better, considering the strength of the 64 version showed that it wasn't just a set of pretty graphics, there's a playable game in there!**



The first thing that struck me about Operation Wolf **was the incredible length of time that it took to actually get going. The title screen loaded, the music played, the credits appeared, the music stopped and it *still* wasn't ready! When it finally started I can't admit to being over keen on the control, as the bullets hardly ever seem to hit what you aim at. They seem to be more content to wander off and hit something else – like a hostage! The graphics and sound are very good, though, with large, colourful sprites and sampled effects, but when the game is filled with such long delays due to the awful multiload then it hardly seems worth it.**

PurPle Saturn day

Exxos, Amiga £24.95

After the Solar wars, in which the legendary pilot Blood gained notoriety, Saturn was declared centre of System-affairs. Peace has been maintained for a good number of years, due to the growing sportsmanship of all the races in the system.

Once every Saturn year a contest is held between champions from the other eight planets in the Solar System, consisting of four games . . .

RING PURSUIT
This is a race through the rings of Saturn between two competitors. Not only have you got to watch out for meteorites, you've also got to navigate your way through a treacherous slalom course marked by the wreckage of old spacecraft.

TRONIC SLIDER
A glowing energy ball hovers around a floating arena. You and your opponent fly hover scooters and fire at the energy ball to cause it to split into fragments. Collect these fragments to win. Crashing into your opponent causes him to lose fragments that you can pick-up.



Too often, when you get a program that gets a lot of attention due to the slickness of the graphics, you find that there is very little gameplay to back them up. Purple Saturn Day **is an exception to the rule – it's excellent! The presentation is very atmospheric – in fact, the way the graphics, sound and presentation work together reminds me very much of that cartoon,** Battle of the Planets **(anyone remember that?). However, *potential buyers beware*, this game is very odd! It takes a lot of thought to win on all the games in training, never mind in competition, and if that's not your cup of tea then you'd better try it out first.**

▼ **Ever fancied slaloming through the rings of Saturn? Well go away, then**

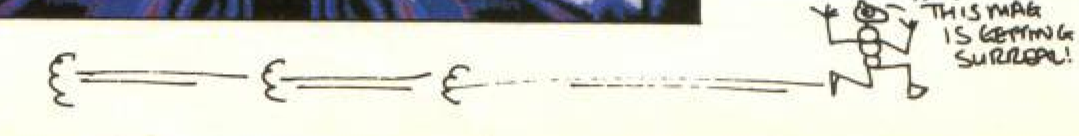


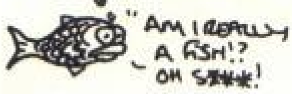
BRAIN BOWLER
The most complex event of the Games. You and your opponent face a Brain Wall, which consists of sparks moving around a circuit. You must fill cells, activate memories and switch gates to guide sparks into the centre brain unit. You win when all the brain sockets have been filled.

TIME-JUMP
You must wind and unwind your time spring to release sparks.



Good God, this is a weird game! The first thing that strikes you are the futuristic-yet-surreal graphics, with strange snake-headed aliens and bizarre colours. That's not to say that they're bad – they're very good indeed, from the wonderfully drawn competitor screens to the superb 3D racing effect. The sound, too, is very good, with a whole host of futuristic effects and tunes. The way the game is presented is very reminiscent of the last Exxos game, Captain Blood, **even down to the Gigeresque shading on the aliens – but if something works why not stick with it? Well, when it comes to** Purple Saturn Day, **don't stick with your cash, buy it!**





way. Should you receive too many hits from enemy weapons, your body-armour will give way and you will sustain a 'lethal injury' – in other words, you'll croak.

Oh, and another thing, watch out for the hostages! They don't like being shot at.

PRESENTATION 40%
Nice intermissions but the terrible multiload ruins it.

GRAPHICS 88%
Large, well drawn sprites and backdrops, but sometimes the colours are a bit weird.

SOUND 82%
Decent enough tunes and some nice warlike spot effects add that 'hard' feel.

HOOKABILITY 70%
Playable enough, but the annoying delays make it slow going as soon as you start . . .

LASTABILITY 57%
. . . and they make it a daunting prospect to return to the game.

OVERALL 66%
A disappointing conversion after the amazing 64 incarnation.

Shoot these sparks to give yourself more energy for a Time-Jump. Fire yourself into another dimension and reach further into the unknown than your opponent to win.

Once all the games have been played through to the final, the winner is declared and wins the ultimate Saturn-Day prize – a kiss from the Saturn Queen. Cor blimey.

PRESENTATION 90%
Brilliant loading screens and generally atmospheric appearance.

GRAPHICS 92%
Wonderfully drawn and animated game graphics and fantastic static screens..

SOUND 89%
Somewhat dodgy intro music but very well executed spot effects.

HOOKABILITY 80%
Initially very confusing set of arcade/strategy games . . .

LASTABILITY 89%
. . . but soon you'll find that you can hardly keep away!

OVERALL 88%
An excellently presented and playable game – but it won't appeal to everyone.

SPITTING IMAGE

Domark, C64 £9.95, £12.95 disk, Amiga £19.95

Warning: Domark are at pains to point out that whatever information you may have heard to the contrary, Barry Manilow will not appear in their game. Not in any shape, size or form. Nope.

Phew! At least that's one set of nostrils we won't have to worry about.

Or do we?

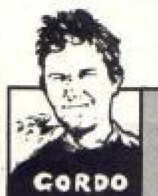
Well actually we don't just have to worry about Barry's puzzling proboscis – we've got to worry about everyone else's as well. No, no, it's not a mystery maniac plastic surgeon, it's worse than that – basically, the end of the world is nigh.

Or at least it nearly is, 'cos one of the world's six most threatening leaders (Maggie, Gorby, Ronnie, Pope Paulie, Khomeini or Bothie . . . er . . . sorry, Botha) is gonna take over if you don't throw a spanner in the works.

Hold it! We didn't mean literally throw a spanner – just set those cute lil' old leaders fighting against each other one to one (best of five bouts) and see who survives. Then deal with the remaining blot on the political landscape secretly (ie: find out when you get there, right?)

And that's it, is it? Nope. Well, you didn't expect this lot to play clean, did you? For a start each his own personal dirty secret er . . . weapon (whips, water pistols – all that stuff) and an even nastier sidekick who comes on at demand to throw bottles, squirt explosives and other nasty tricks.

And now – *Blue Peter*.



GORDO

If you fancy a soothing afternoon admiring the graphical capabilities of your 64, do yourself a favour – don't buy a copy of this. OK, so forget about the graphics, what about the game – bit boring if you ask me. It's really just a load of bashing the joystick and hoping you score a hit – not the most varied beat 'em up I've ever seen. The Amiga version might have better animated graphics but when you get down to it, the gameplay's pretty much the same – *all* the same. Don't buy, unless you're weely, weely sure it's what you want.



KATI

Bit of a larf this. Well, the packaging and presentation is anyway. In fact, as far as jobs like the inlay, the box, the intro and the inbetween game bits go, Domark have definitely come up with a winner. Shame the gameplay doesn't match up to all of that, though. I mean, strip away all the TV hype and all you've got is an average beat em up. On the Amiga version the graphics go some way to making up for this (big sprites, clever secret weapons) but the 64 version is so badly drawn you might as well be watching your mum and dad slogging it out on the local football pitch. If you really want this, try it out first.

▼ **A symbolic if representationalist schema of the religious dichotemies existent in our current political climate** (64)

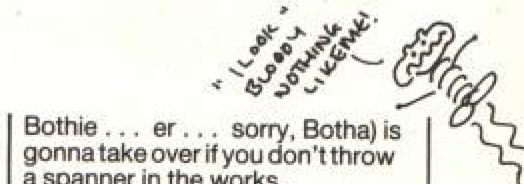


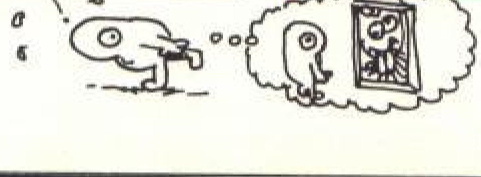


▲ **Get 'im, Maggie, even if Kati and Maff don't like you very much!**

64		amiga
80%	**PRESENTATION**	80%
	Trendy intro sequence and selection screen. Two-player game.	
30%	**GRAPHICS**	75%
	Blocky, fuzzy sprites and basic backgrounds on the 64. The Amiga sprites are much larger, better animated and the backdrops have more detail – but then, they should have.	
43%	**SOUND**	40%
	Both versions have the familiar *Spitting Image* TV title tune and sparse, basic, in-game spot effects.	
49%	**HOOKABILITY**	64%
	Well, it's worth looking into . . .	
34%	**LASTABILITY**	49%
	. . . but not for that long.	
39%	**OVERALL**	59%

Tasty presentation, not so tasty game.





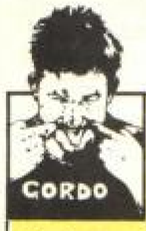


AFTERBURNER

Activision, C64 £9.99 cassette, £14.99 disk

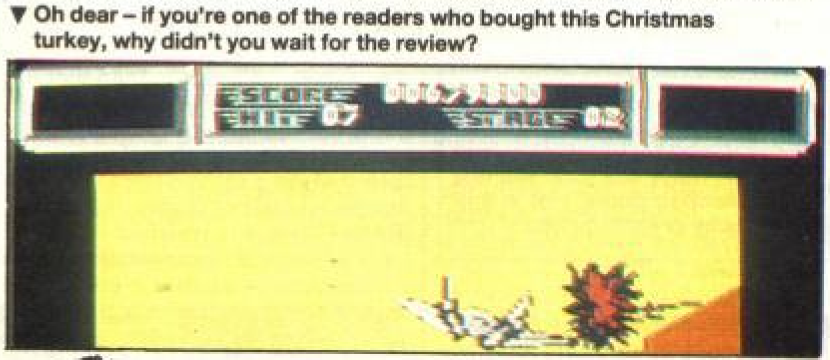
Out of the city and the air is anything but clear. Enemy aircraft fly over the colony countryside, strafing the roads, terrifying the people and destroying the landscape. Something must be done.

Since there're loads of enemies, their fighter craft are small short-range affairs, the kind of thing that can be easily taken out by a single high-powered jet fighter – an F-14, for example. Planes like this are expensive; the Air Force don't send them out willy-nilly and only the best pilots are sent on such missions. The plane's ready, you've been briefed – so shake, rattle, ROLL IT! (I know it sounds daft, but I didn't think of it, honest).


CORDO

After all the hype and promotion, the game doesn't live up to it: the 64 conversion of Afterburner **is incredibly disappointing. The graphics and sound are laughably bad, making the idea of a multiload (which, incidentally, it is) a joke. The glitchy plane wobbles about in a flat sky over bland and blocky ground formations that do anything but rush towards you in 3D, and the chunkiness of the other sprites has to be seen to be believed. If you've bought this, then you have my commiserations.**

▼ **Oh dear – if you're one of the readers who bought this Christmas turkey, why didn't you wait for the review?**




MAFF

I thought when I saw R-Type **that Activision had got their act together as far as arcade conversions go, but I'm afraid that** Afterburner **has proved me wrong. Believe me, when I came to write this review I really looked hard for something good to say, some interesting feature – but I couldn't. There's nothing interesting going on from start to finish. I can't confess to being a great fan of the arcade original, but I can still spot a bad conversion. I hope whoever bought this is happy with it, and their families keep paying the sanitarium bills.**

conversion 30 factor

PRESENTATION 34%
Needless multiload, sloppy control and weak appearance.

GRAPHICS 26%
Drab and blocky on the whole, but some are really bad.

SOUND 12%
Ping! Oh dear . . .

HOOKABILITY 24%
Flying a jet through Legoland is hardly the most thrilling of prospects.

LASTABILITY 10%
All the levels are *very* similar and equally uninteresting.

OVERALL 17%
Well, the tape didn't snap . . . unfortunately.

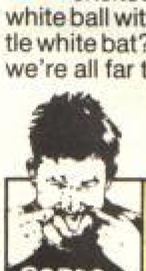
SPACEBALL

Rainbow Arts/US Gold, C64 £9.99 cassette, £14.99 disk; Amiga £24.99

Remember the good old days, when everyone got really excited about hitting a little white ball with a teensy weensy little white bat? No, we don't either – we're all far too young (fnar).

Anyway, if you missed out then, put your money on the table and here's your chance: you and up to 7 other players can take part in the biggest ping pong tournament this side of 1976.

Break a hole in the wall behind your opponent's bat, send the ball through it and you've scored a goal. Occasionally, speed up, slow down or double yer bat icons appear mid-screen to add a bit of variety. Wooh!


CORDO

Ouf! I feel a bit dizzy. What with this and Blip Video Classics **last month I'm beginning to feel really confused. Didn't this sort of game stop being produced over 10 years ago? Didn't it die a very honourable death then? Why are they bringing it back to life? Why are they asking you to pay for it? Does anybody really think this sort of game reflects the potential of the 64 or the Amiga? Who knows? All I know is that this is probably the most boring, overpriced game I've seen this month. Yeuch!**



Boy, am I glad technology has advanced a bit since ***every*** **arcade game looked like this. Talk about boring! Well, OK, let's talk about boring. Let's talk about spending ten or twenty quid only to find that you've paid for a single background screen, a bit of snazzy music and the oldes most repetitive game in the business. Right! That's enough depressing talk. Just make sure you don't buy this.**

▼ **This is possibly one of the worst full price games you'll see this year – and that's no joke**



amiga

We've seen the Amiga version (£24.99) and apart from a few extra backdrops, the game is exactly the same. If you see it, ignore it.

update

PRESENTATION 70%
Loading screen plus demo game and up to 8-player tournament option.

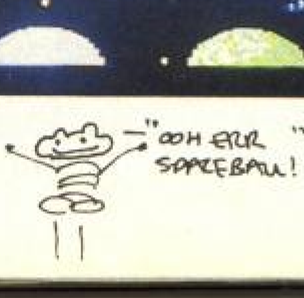
GRAPHICS 14%
Bat, ball, icons, one background – and that's it.

SOUND 40%
Grating title tune and very basic in-game effects.

HOOKABILITY 13%
Oh well – you might as well have a go.

LASTABILITY 5%
If you haven't seen this before, you won't want to see it again.

OVERALL 13%
Unless you're ***really*** **into nostalgia, don't buy this.**



TV SPORTS Football

Cinemaware/Mirrorsoft, Amiga £29.99

●Heave pigskin about in the most realistic Gridiron game yet

Someone once said about Gridiron, 'Football is war', and with all the heavy contact going on, this seems to be true. But there is more to this game than just running, throwing and hitting – there's loads of tactical play as well. Before we go into that, maybe we should give a quick explanation to those unfamiliar with the sport of . . .

GRIDIRON FOOTBALL

The idea is to get the ball into the other team's 'endzone' (the area behind their goal line). To do this yer pigskin thingy must be moved at least ten yards in four plays (called 'downs'), otherwise possession is handed to the opposing team.

Points can be scored in four ways . . .

1 – A touchdown scores 6 points and is awarded when a player catches the ball in the endzone or runs into the endzone carrying the ball.
2 – A conversion is scored by kicking the ball between the two posts after a touchdown, and is worth 1 point.
3 – A field goal is worth 3 points and is scored by kicking the ball between the two posts; it's taken instead of a down.
4 – A safety is when the opposing team's Quarterback is 'sacked' (tackled behind the line of scrimmage) in his own endzone, for 2 points.

The method of scoring these points becomes very complicated, each play having its own name and code. In Cinemaware's simulation you must learn the effectiveness of these tactics and use them in the correct combinations. You too can be a Head Coach!

CONTROLLING THE PLAYS

All the strategies in *TV Sports Football* are controlled via a tactical screen. Offensive players choose between Shotgun, I-formation, Pro-Set and kicking plays, followed by the running patterns and the kick types. Defence players set up their defensive line (4-3, 3-4, 6-1, and 'key' plays) and the corresponding defending tactics. Play then moves onto the field, where the defence controls the 'man in motion' and the offense controls the Quarterback, sending the pass forward and then (hopefully) running the player towards the opposing endzone.



I'm not really a great fan of American Footy, but even I can spot a game that has been brilliantly packaged and presented. TV Sports Football **is such a game. The general appearance of the game is very attractive, with some brilliant intro scenes and intermissions, such as the cheering crowd, waving players and humorous commercials. The combinations of tactics are really comprehensive (enough to be way over my head) and I can see fans of the sport getting well stuck into the action. As a matter of fact, even though I found it very confusing at first, I'm starting to enjoy the game – well, when Maff isn't shouting and swearing at the opposing team!**



American Football is my most favourite sport, so when I saw the demo version of this my mouth didn't 'arf water! Now the finished game has arrived with all its presentation I can safely say that it's the most realistic Gridiron simulation on the market. There are a few annoying bits that I didn't like, such as the repeated disk swapping and some niggling technical errors, but this doesn't detract from the gameplay *too* much. Computer gamers who aren't especially into American Footy won't like this, because that's all it is. No arcade sequences, just pure Football – both tactical and action packed. Gridiron fans buy it today!

64

All you Gridiron groupies stuck with the classic *4th & Inches* at the moment will be dead pleased to know that a 64 version is planned – no details yet, though.

update

PRESENTATION 83%
Nice intermission scenes and in-game appearance but the disk swapping is a bit of a pain.

GRAPHICS 94%
Extremely atmospheric drawings and sprites, but the animation jerks at times.

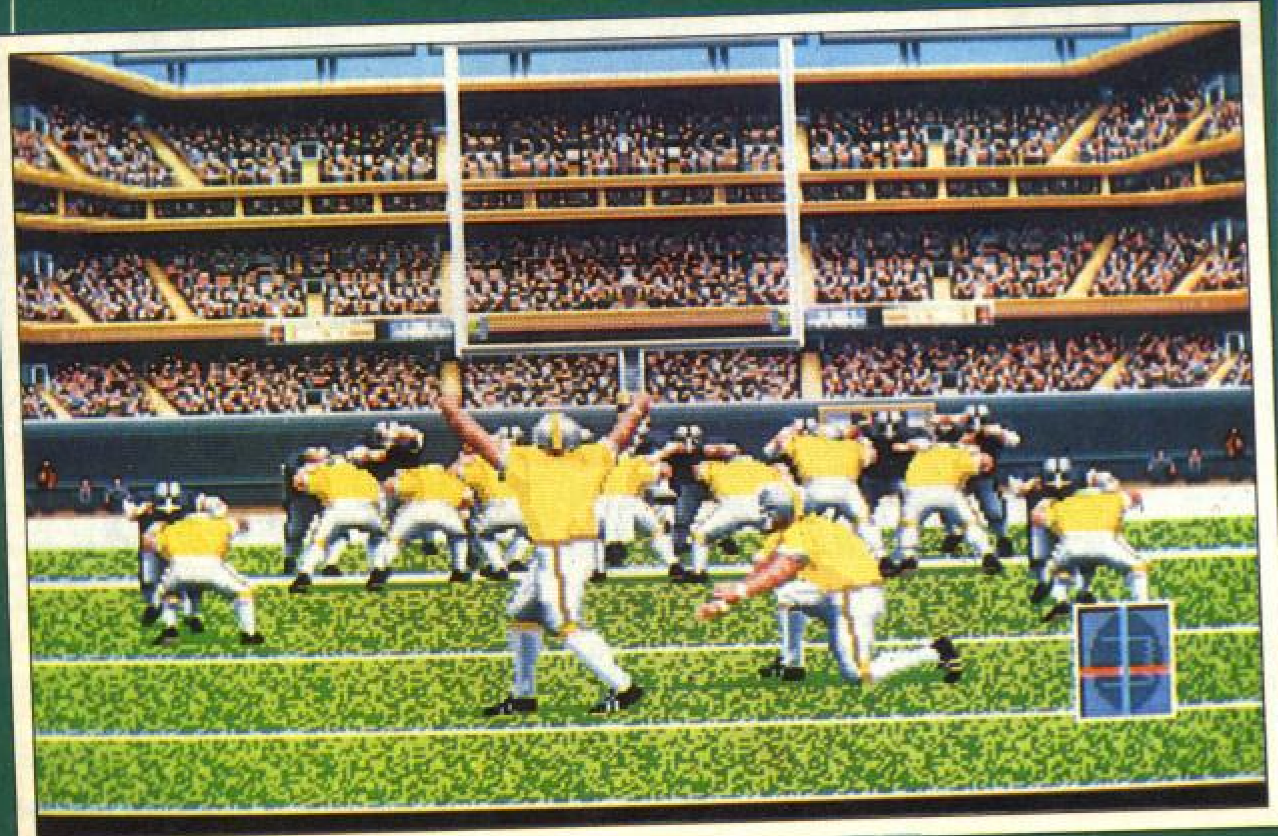
SOUND 69%
Good, hard spot effects but the music is rather twee.

HOOKABILITY 78%
Difficult to figure unless you're conversant with the rules of American football.

LASTABILITY 92%
Every game is different, giving you virtually the whole NFL to play with.

OVERALL 90%
The most realistic and best presented American Footy simulation so far. Gridiron fans shouldn't miss out!

▼ The kick is *good!* And so it should be – we spent ages practising this, you know



STARRAY

Logotron, C64 £9.95 cassette, £14.95 disk

Sssooo, you vant to be a Star Warrior, huh? One of those guys who wears white skin-tight jump suits, carries a sick bag and smiles a lot when subjected to G-force? Nice, real nice.

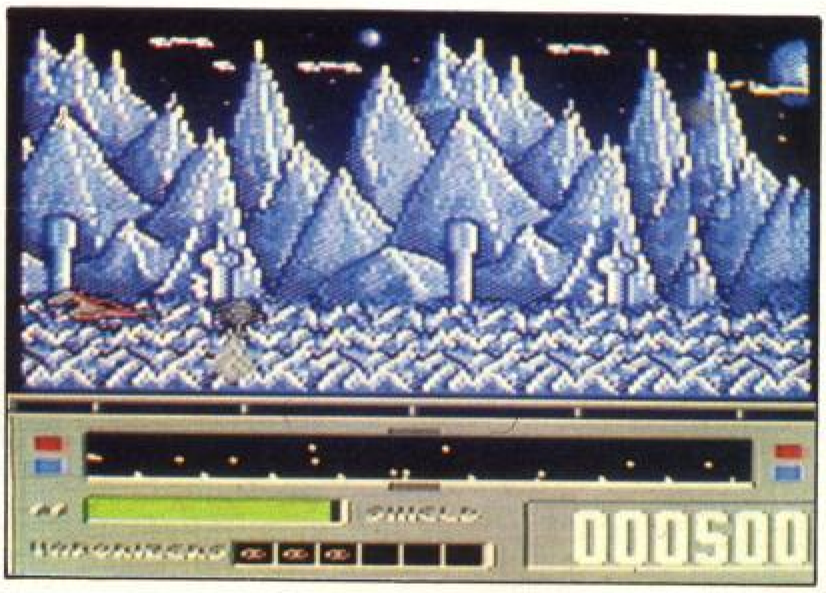
Well, say *thankyou mummy* to Logotron because they've said you can be one – right now.

Well, go on then. What do you mean where? Everybody (everybody who's anybody, anyway) knows that *the* most fashionable mission of the month is on Gorbaxa, guarding valuable Kryptium energy cells from the sort of guys who stop at nothing to get their hands on a bit of dosh.

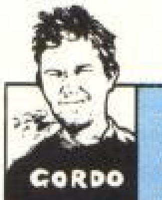
Oh yeah – once you're out there, blasting those black market pirates out of their underpants, try to remember to collect those bonus balls. Well, where else are you supposed to get laser fire, temporary invulnerability, extra acceleration and bonus points? Be good and we might even send out an air bus with extra missiles and shield supplies. But don't stay around too long – or those mega-tough, incredibly nasty blue hun-



Give me a copy of Dropzone **and I'd say it was absolutely fantastic, triff, brill, wunnerful, dead amusing, stand on my head and do a dance an' all that an' everyfin'. So what's wrong with** Starray **you might ask – it's exactly the same gameplay, innit? Well, it would be if it weren't for the fancy graphics. Logotron have tried everso hard to give us some really snazzy parallax scrolling, but it just doesn't work. Go too slow or too fast and it just judders and shudders and makes it dead hard to see what's going on. If they'd concentrated on getting more rapid fire instead, it wouldn't have mattered so much about the graphics – the gameplay would have made up for it. As it is, the whole thing's only just above average. Oh well . . .**



▲ ***Starray! GO!.*** **Well, you had to be there**

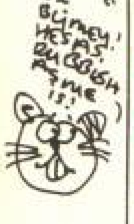


GORDO

Aha! Looks like a classic case of ignoring the gameplay in favour of the graphics, here. Tut, tut. Shame really, because it wouldn't have mattered about the parallax scrolling if you'd just had the Amiga version's firing rate and smoother control of your ship. I mean, parallax scrolling's great but not if it gets in the way of the game. Looks as if its got in the way of the sound as well, come to think of it – there's no title tune and only a few pretty basic in-game spot effects. As a Dropzone/Defender **variant** Starray **could have been really brill – as it is it's just . . . well . . . average – innit Ken? *(Yes – Ken).***

SUPERMAN™ THE MAN OF STEEL™





Producer, C64 £9.95 cassette, £14.95 disk

Earthquakes and floods are disrupting civilisation as we know it and there's nothing we can do. Even the government of the good ol' US of A is in despair.

But wait, what's this? Is it a bird? Is it a plane? Is it a pair of red underpants flapping in the breeze? Nope – IT'S SUPERMAN (*his* briefs don't flap, they cling to the skin).

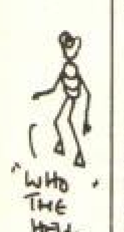
Well – a man who uses enough grease in his hair to keep the makers of Brylcreem in gel for ten years knows what a man who uses enough . . . er . . . a man like that has to do. He has to deactivate Darkseid's disruptive weather station somewhere in space.

And a mission like this doesn't come easy. Actually, it comes in five parts. Using a choice of weapons, all our hero has to do is fly to STAR laboratories (killing parademons) to meet the scientist in charge, guide the Professor's shuttle through a life-threatening asteroid belt, infiltrate the corridors of the space satellite, guide the deactivated enemy satellite through another asteroid belt before attacking the outer defences of the Lexcorp station, nerve centre of Darkseid's evil plot, AND defeating the Lexcorp commandos in a final confrontation inside the station itself. Phew!

I bet he drinks Carling Black Label.

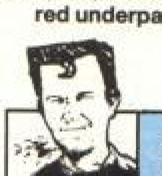


▲ *Da da, dadada da da* **an' all that Superman stuff an' everyfin' – jolly red underpant japes in Tynesoft's rather nice game**



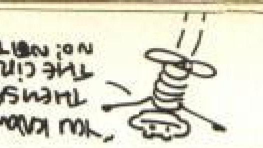


There's something dead odd about this game. It's not the incredibly long multiload (even on disk) which got right up my nose, or the fact that all the levels are pretty turgid, 'blast a few aliens out of the way' sort of stuff. Nope, it's the fact that it's as easy as falling off a bike and leaving bits of your knee on the pavement, to get right to the end of this game on your very first go. Why? Because Superman can't die. Yep, no matter how low your energy gets, no matter how many holes the enemy makes in your underpants, you still survive. Worse still, two of the levels are repeated, so you really only get three levels for your hard-earned dosh. What a waste.



GORDO

Shame really. If Tynesoft hadn't been so keen to put together an adventure with so many episodes they might actually have come up with a playable game. The 3D Space Harrier**-style section, for example, is really smooth but there just aren't enough different sorts of enemy sprites to give it depth. Same goes for the inside sections – add a bit of a maze and a mappable area and you could end up with a really involved and interesting game. Instead, all you've got is whole load of lightweight, mediocre sections which don't hold your attention for longer than a couple of minutes and take ages to load in. Not much really – at least not for ten quid.**



ters come after you.
And when you come off watch, you can have a go at the six next most fashionable warzones in the galaxy.
Happy now? OK then – don't forget your thermal underwear.

PRESENTATION 57%
High-score table and loading screen, clear control panel plus radar display.

GRAPHICS 66%
Large ship, pretty (but sometimes busy) backgrounds – but the ambitious parallax scrolling judders too much.

SOUND 30%
No title tune, basic but echoing in-game fire effects.

HOOKABILITY 62%
Easy to grasp, though the scrolling and the occasionally unclear graphics might put you off a bit.

LASTABILITY 55%
It's not *the* shoot em up you'll turn to over and over again.

OVERALL 60%
A near miss – with a bit of tweaking it could have been a big hit.

amiga

For £24.95, the Amiga version, sporting three extra levels *and* Lois Lane, should be available soon.

update

PRESENTATION 60%
Three difficulty levels and slick comic book intros but the multiload is incredibly tedious.

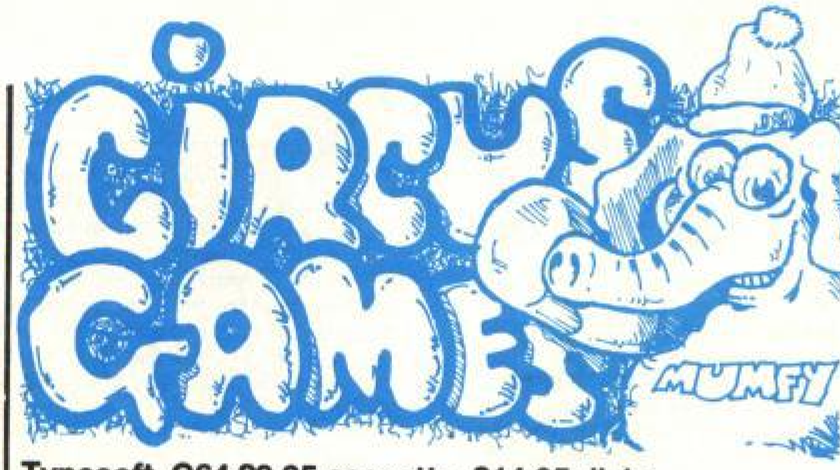
GRAPHICS 70%
Smooth but slow 3D sequence plus well-defined (though not very detailed) vertically and horizontally scrolling sections.

SOUND 40%
Superman title tune but only a few, simplistic effects in-game.

HOOKABILITY 50%
You have to be really hard if the multiload didn't put you off.

LASTABILITY 18%
You finish the game on your first go and you won't want to go through it again.

OVERALL 39%
Is it a bird? Is it a plane? No – it's a turkey.

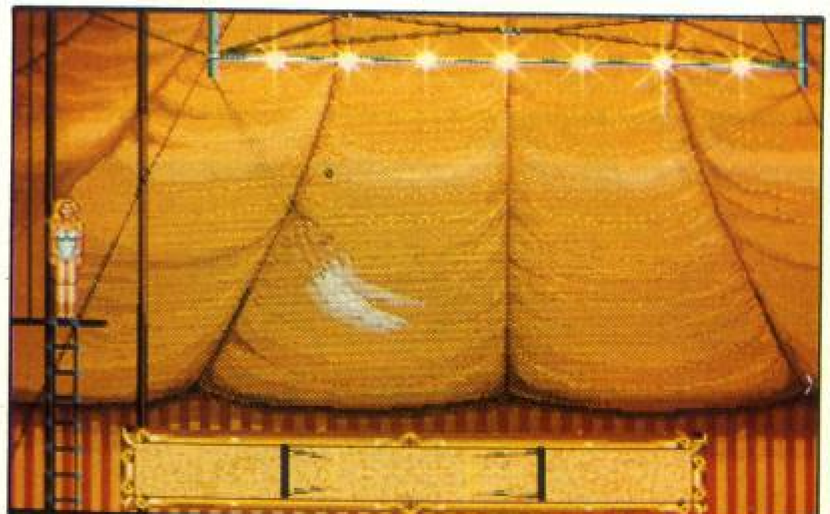


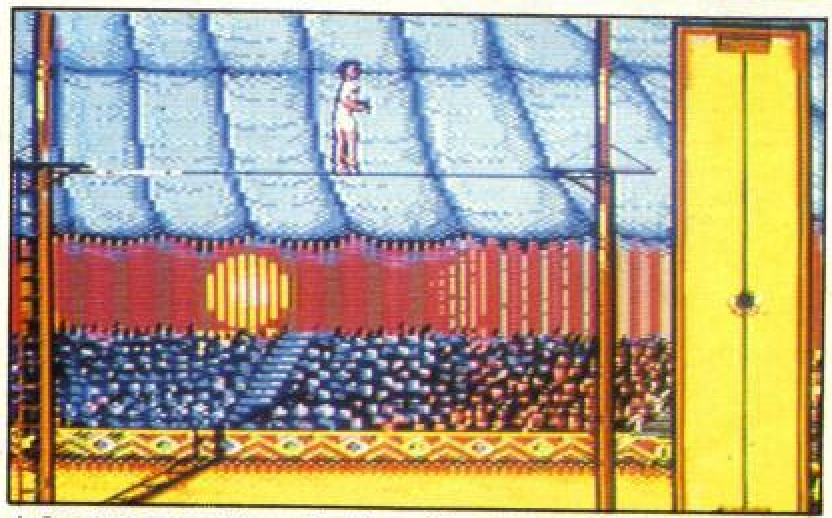
Tynesoft, C64 £9.95 cassette, £14.95 disk; Amiga £24.95

L-l-l-l-adies and gen'r'men, roll up, roll up for the Ringling Brothers circus – *the* grrreatest show on earth.
Step right up, step right up! You sir, in the ZZAP! T–shirt, the one with the bright red hair – you, and up to three of your friends. Right this way, right this way.
Feeling fit today are we, sir? Ready for anything? Right then, here's your special participator's ticket – if you'll just move this way now ladies and gen'r'men, you'll see this gentleman here take part in four circus tricks for *the very first time in his life.* A big hand for the competitor. Thank you very much.

And tonight's dangerous, hair-raising and *most spectacular* events are: the tightrope, trick horse riding, trapeze and, a big hand for this one, most dangerous of all, putting life and limb right in the path of death – tiger training.
Step right this way, ladies and gen'r'men. Come to the circus . . . the greatest show on earth.
Sorry sir, no fat people and no dogs . . .

▼ 'He flies through the air with the greatest of ease . . . ' er . . . SPLAT! (Amiga)





▲ One drop and you'll have a head to match any hangover, Mr Smarty Tightropewalker Person (64)



If you've stepped up to take a look at this, the best thing you could possibly do is step right down again. If you were expecting something up to the standard of Tynesoft's Summer **and** Winter Olympiad **cut your losses 'cos this isn't it. Apart from the trapeze, which is quite fun, the events are boring, difficult to control and as playable as a broken ukelele. If you really want a fun night out at the circus, save your money for when the real thing comes to town.**



Tarantantara tarantanta-ra. I think the circus is great (I'm talking Charlie Caroli's greatest fan) so when I heard that this was coming out, I was weelly, weelly pleased. Well, you've got to admit – it *was* a good idea. It's just a pity that the final product hasn't come off. On both formats, all the events are far too difficult and the really illogical control method just makes things worse. By the time you've waited for the multiload on the 64 version (which is slightly more playable, by the way) or spent a couple of hours swapping Amiga disks, you'll probably be quite happy to throw this in the ring – and leave it there.

64		amiga
70%	**PRESENTATION**	70%
	Up to four player tournament option, plus end of game fanfare, chance to practise events and slick links in between events. The 64 multiload, however is very slow and there's a lot of tedious disk swapping on the Amiga version.	
69%	**GRAPHICS**	79%
	Colourful and well-defined on both formats; there's a bit more attention to detail on the Amiga.	
80%	**SOUND**	75%
	A whole medley of silly, atmospheric title and in-game circus tunes, interspersed with the odd sound effect.	
69%	**HOOKABILITY**	69%
	Difficult control methods undermine the initial novelty value.	
42%	**LASTABILITY**	39%
	It's hard to play, tedious to load and not particularly addictive.	
41%	**OVERALL**	39%
	An unusual and highly original idea let down by its very disappointing execution.	



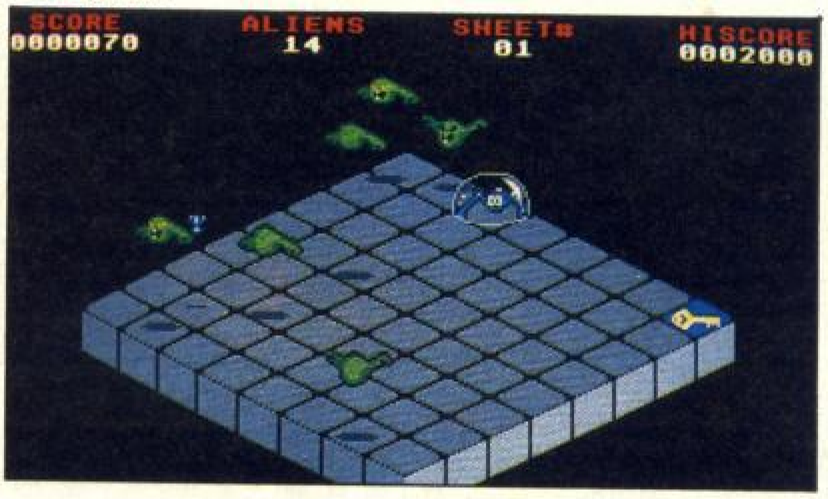
No Excuses

Arcana, Amiga £19.95

The time is the future (isn't is always?) Psychologists and electro-scientists have got together to find a way of exploring the inner reaches of the mind. Unfortunately the system latched onto the fears and hates of the subjects using it, amplifying them into grotesque creatures from their group id.

The scientists developed a probe named the Strider, controlled by a person under deep hypnosis – a state at which they can reject any fears or anxieties – so that a battle could take place within the mind-grid. Aliens roam the grid and drop bombs which affect it in various ways, such as destroying a block or turning them to jelly. Yum yum.

▼ **Wander, wander, bounce bounce . . . *(yaaawn)* . . . I think I've had enough now**





No Excuses has all the trademarks that are usually attributed to a budget game; simplistic graphics, iffy sound and unrewarding gameplay. The problem is that it costs 20 quid! Hardly a budget price, I'm sure you'll agree. The movement is thoroughly confusing and most of the time *I* couldn't tell which direction the Strider was facing. On completion of the first monotonous level, imagine my dismay on seeing that the next level played exactly the same. Agh! No Excuses is a dull game that has been priced way out of its league.



It's difficult to think of anything constructive to say about a game like No Excuses. You've got a grid designer, I suppose, but this doesn't help when all it's useful for is designing levels for a really dull game. After struggling with the controls for a few goes, I worked out what was going on. It was then that it dawned on me that there was no real game to speak of. Move a bit, turn, fire, move a bit, turn fire . . . that's just about it. After releasing the best trivia game available (Powerplay), it's not a good idea to release a sub-standard blasting game such as this at £20! Come *on!*

PRESENTATION 49%
A few options and a 'course' designer, but little variety and a rubbish control system.

GRAPHICS 29%
Poor definition and animation on all the sprites; the backgrounds are dead boring.

SOUND 35%
Basically consists of a few short and dreary samples.

HOOKABILITY 20%
First thoughts: 'What the . . .'

LASTABILITY 12%
Last thoughts: 'Get *out* of here!'.

OVERALL 19%
A weak concept worked into a terrible game.

Double Dragon

Melbourne House, Amiga £19.99

The Shadow Boss has kidnapped your true love and taken her to the Black Warrior hideout! You must set off to the rescue . . . once you've found your deadly Karate slippers . . .

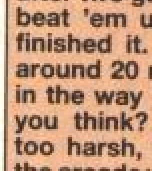
Members of the Shodow Boss's gang have been left along the route to 'duff you up', but you're an ace Karate expert and can smash them in just as much. Whoar! Not only are you a whizz with your hands and feet, but also with weapons which found along the route. To rescue your girl, you must battle through various stages to the hideout itself, where the Boss awaits . . .

Can you do it, or will you end up looking like ground beef on the pavement?

conversion 43 factor



The conversion of Double Dragon is one of those that falls into the 'long awaited' category. Now the Amiga version has arrived, we can all breathe a sigh of relief . . . well, maybe not. The graphics are great, as is the sound (the title music is sampled from the coin-op), but the game itself doesn't present too much of a challenge. The aggressive feel of the fighting in the original has been mostly lost, making the game a lot easier. All said it's not a *bad* game, it's just got something missing . . .



Double Dragon is one of my favourite arcade games, so when I saw the pretty title page and listened to the excellent music (both exactly like the arcade machine) I thought I was in for a treat. However after two games of an average beat 'em up, I found that I'd finished it. In a total time of around 20 minutes. Not much in the way of lastability, don't you think? Maybe I'm being too harsh, as I've completed the arcade version already, but as I remember it wasn't *that* easy! My advice is to try it first.

▼ **Maff completed this on his second go – what does that tell you about the game? *(answers on a baked trout only)***



PRESENTATION 60%
Dodgy multiload and tricky controls let the side down. The rest is fine though.

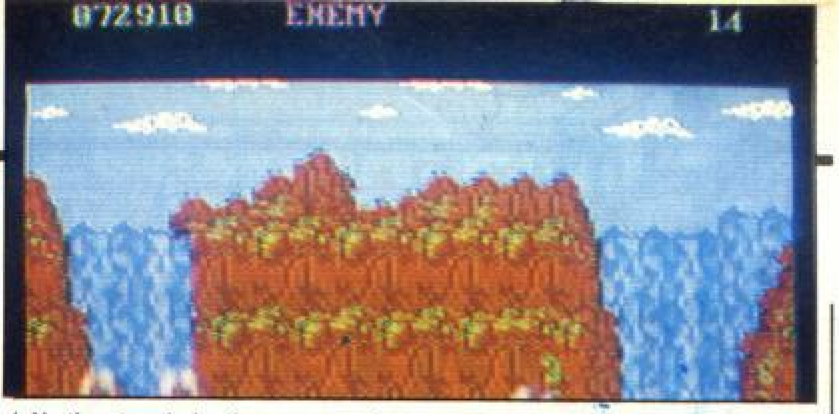
GRAPHICS 81%
Quite close to the original, but they should really be closer than that.

SOUND 83%
Arcade-identical intro music and 'unusual' in-game effects.

HOOKABILITY 87%
Great fun to play the arcade classic for free at first . . .

LASTABILITY 34%
But it's rather easy to complete within a few goes.

OVERALL 62%
Not a bad game, but a rather weak conversion..



▲ No time to admire the scenery – just get a-hackin' and a-jumpin', OK? (64)

TIGER ROAD

Capcom, C64 £9.99 cassette, £14.99 disk, Amiga £19.99

Dare you think it? Can you believe it? Could it ever make sense? Can you cope? What do you mean *with what?* With Ken D Fish, that's what. Yeah, looks like our very own lovable, cuddly, harmless and everso innocent Ken D Fish has a pretty shady distant past.

Capcom sources inform us that deep in those dark and dangerous times when Japan was a country full of er . . . dark and dangerous deeds and Ken's family was still in the early stages of evolution (ie, human and not particularly fishy at all) one vile, boil-ridden and generally smelly ancestor of his was running riot in the east. Shocking eh?

The nasty piece of work in question was none other than Ryu Ken Oh, the sort of villain who kidnaps children, razes harmless villages to the ground and brainwashes simple peasants into becoming the soldiers of his black and wicked cause. Boo, hiss.

Lucky that even then there were guys like Lee Wong (that's you) around. These were the sort of guys who risked everything to free the innocent and save the free. Aaah.

Single-handedly and without the tiniest bit of help, he sets off through several different temple, outdoor and indoor environments to beat those brain-dead soldiers into a pulp, rescue the children and make sure guys like Ryu Ken Oh never breathe again.

Good job that some of the dying soldiers leave bonus power, weapons and goodies behind. Not so good that every now and again Lee comes across a great big, stonking, mega-hard temple guardian, the sort of guy you'd like to spend a lifetime washing dishes and avoiding – let alone kill. Unless he jumps out of his way and beats him up pretty quick, Lee's mincemeat.

Oh yeah – and if you let the darker side of Ken's family survive what will happen to Ken D Fish?

Fish fingers, that's what.



Yey, I thought when I first saw this – a Tiger Road **coin-op (well nearly) slap bang in the middle of the ZZAP! office. Fab! Now for the bad news: neither version is entirely faithful to the coin-op and not all that many levels look the same. No hold on – don't go rushing off with that miserable look on your face – here comes the good news: it's *still* really good fun to play. Yep, the combat's fast, the gameplay's furious and the levels are just hard enough to keep you playing on and on. I wouldn't say the 64 or the Amiga graphics are exactly spectacular but the action is a bucketful of fun. And basically, when it comes down to it and all that an' everyfin', that's what counts, innit?**



Call me mad Maff if you like, but I just couldn't get into this. I haven't played the arcade game, so I can't really comment on how good a conversion it is – but on both formats, the game itself just seems to lack that extra edge. Apart from the end-of-level baddies, the sprites aren't all that big and a lot of the time on the 64, I found it a bit difficult to see what was going on. The sound's not too bad on either version but when it comes to the gameplay department there just isn't enough to interest me. *You* might like it though. All I'm saying is, try before you rush out and rip it off the shelf.



Threaten to throw a bucket of water over my head and I'd be the first to admit that Tiger Road **isn't the slickest conversion I've ever seen on the 64. The levels aren't particularly faithful to the coin-op (a bit more on the Amiga, but not much) and some of the end-of-level aliens are a bit of a letdown. Still, it's a dead good game in its own right with plenty of variety to keep you hooked. As long as you're not expecting a well-faithful conversion, run down to your local software shop and demand to see this in a strong, purposeful voice.**



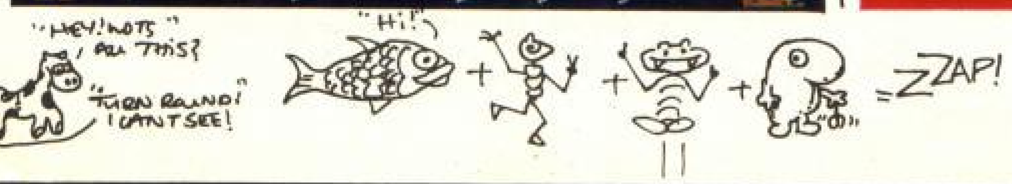
▲ Now, he's not the smallest opponent in the world, is he? So – *be careful!* (Amiga)

conversion 74 factor

▼ Well, I'd rather be up here than down there amongst that lot, I can tell you. Hack you to death as soon as say 'Delek Batey', they would (64)



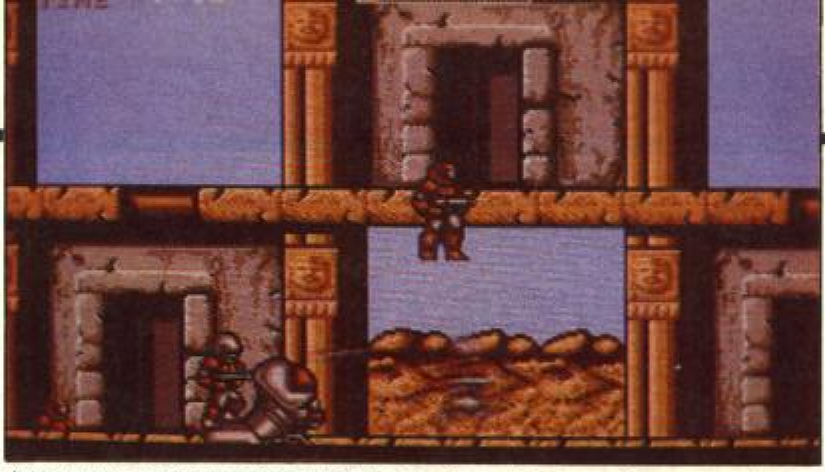
64		amiga
65%	**PRESENTATION**	68%
	Keyboard option and no-frills screen presentation on the 64. The Amiga has an inbetween level screen as well – wooh.	
70%	**GRAPHICS**	70%
	Nice backgrounds on both versions but some of the sprites on the 64 are a bit small and lack detail. Amiga has nice animation and the sprites are very like the coin op.	
69%	**SOUND**	78%
	Silly oriental title music on the 64 and bland in-game theme – luckily you can switch it off. The Amiga version has a title tune and dramatic sound effects.	
82%	**HOOKABILITY**	83%
	Easy to get into and very addictive right from the start.	
66%	**LASTABILITY**	66%
	The action might get a mite repetitive after a while.	
73%	**OVERALL**	76%
	Not a top-notch conversion but a pretty good game nevertheless.	



64/Amiga

SOLDIER OF Light

Ace, C64 £8.99 cassette, £14.99 disk; Amiga £24.99



▲ **If only the control method wasn't so awkward, because those graphics are *really* good . . .** (Amiga)

The point of having organisations set up to run things is so that things can be more efficient. The problem is, when there's a head organisation, rebellious forces have something to aim an attack towards.

Galactic High Command has run things in the Galaxy for a good number of years, but now they're facing a problem in the shape of an organisation known as 'The Federation'. This band of heavily armed outlaws has spread across the Soa system, consisting of the planets Cleemalt, Lagto and Cleedos, leaving fortresses laden with troops.

You play the part of Xain d'Sleena (which, backwards, says *Aneels'd Niax* – interesting, eh?) – a crack stormtrooper, more adept with the use of firearms and the Exo-skeleton armour than any other warrior in his fleet. You must fly out to the invaded planets and destroy the Federation's forces; but on all of the planets you will find a number of pods containing additional weaponry to fit onto your Exo-skeleton, which have been left due to a malfunction by the computer at Central Control.

Once all the planets have been cleared, you must return and check them again, just in case an invasion force has managed to reach the planet.

conversion 49 factor



When you consider what makes games like Soldier of Light **popular in the arcades, it usually boils down to a few basic elements – the graphics, the sound and the mindless action. Naturally the 64 can't hope to achieve the quality of audio and video that the coin-op offered, but when a horrendous control system plagues you then things begin to look a bit grim. Now the Amiga has the power to produce the sound and graphics of the arcade original, but for some reason the programmers have got the game to be 'similar' and left it at that. As a game it's not too bad (the control actually works!), but like the 64 version it's not up to much in the conversion stakes.**



▲ **Maff's fave arcade game is at last converted to our fave home computer** (64)

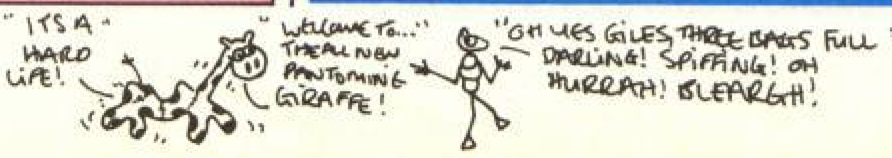


Well this has been 'in the making' for long enough hasn't it? Soldier of Light **is one of my favourite arcade games (although I played it in its** Xain d'Sleena **incarnation), so I naturally looked forward to the home version. The early 64 demos I saw gave the impression that it was going to be really good, but now that both 64 and Amiga versions have arrived in their entirety, the 64 version has deteriorated into a sloppy game with a horrible control method and little resemblance to the arcade original, and the Amiga version has grabbed the wrong end of the stick, with lost presentation and missing levels all over the shop. Fans of the original BEWARE! This may not be the game you expected when you saw the name** Soldier of Light.



When Maff raved about how great this arcade game was, I expected a bit more than a simple horizontally scrolling run-shoot-collect game. He assures me that the home versions aren't much like the original, but the games themselves aren't much cop on their own, either. Neither version is that brilliant – the 64 version suffers from an appalling control method and annoying quirks, whereas the Amiga version has lost a load of presentation and levels – when a game's multiload anyway you'd expect them to be included. Soldier of Light **isn't *too* bad, but it should have been a lot better.**

64		amiga
41%	**PRESENTATION**	53%
	Neither version lives up to its potential, with missing presentation and levels and the 64's terrible control.	
62%	**GRAPHICS**	80%
	The 64 version has small, blocky and badly coloured sprites and the Amiga version – although nicely drawn – has everything a bit squashed on the small playing area.	
71%	**SOUND**	75%
	Woobly soundtracks and effects that hardly capture the feel of the original.	
70%	**HOOKABILITY**	83%
	The Amiga version is fun to play for a while, but the 64 version is rather infuriating to get used to.	
49%	**LASTABILITY**	66%
	Few levels and little lasting appeal, but the Amiga version fares better due to its greater playability.	
61%	**OVERALL**	**79%**
	An average 64 shoot 'em up and a disappointing Amiga arcade conversion which may appeal to blast fans.	





BETTER DEAD THAN ALIEN

Electra, C64 £9.95 cassette, £14.95 disk

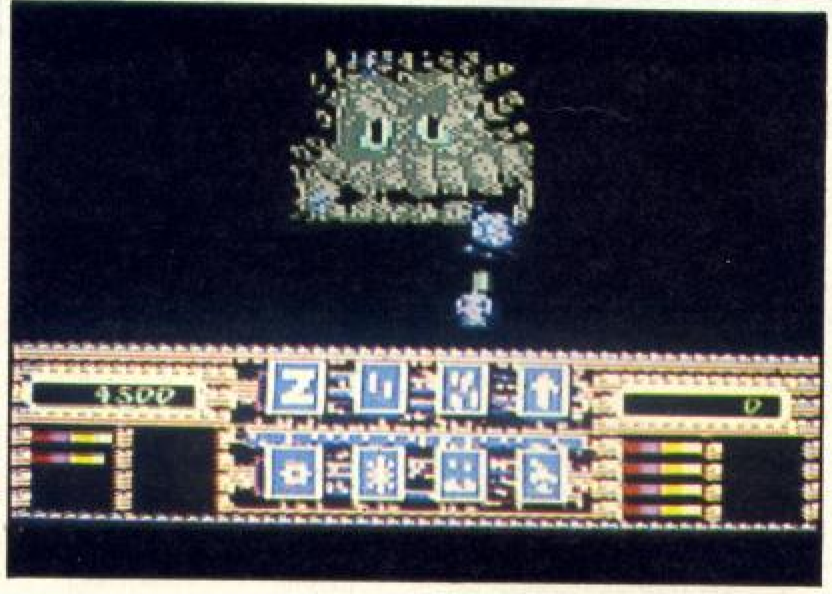
Out there in space there's a guy so tough he'd rather die than miss the spine-tingling pleasure of shattering one single alien into a thousand bloody bits.

Luckily, the aliens come searching for him – in waves. Two waves of space invader type aliens firing shots, followed by one mega-biggy missile-firing mama-alien per level. Hit an alien that's flashing green and it turns into a capsule full of extra weapon capabilities.

A password system lets you return to the point where you left off. Wooo-eee-ooo!



If you've been looking at the screenshot, you probably don't think much of this. And you'd be right – about the graphics, anyway. Actually (no, no don't call me Ashley – aargh!) the sound isn't up to a that much either – just a set of simple, repetitive tunes. So why do I like this? No, not because I'm a bit of a pervy, green, purple or just downright peculiar – just 'cos I think Space Invaders **was great and this is a fab 'n' triff variant on that. For some weird, interspacial reason you just can't help coming back for more. Bit pricey, though, for what you get.**



▲ **Awwwww, isn't he cute! Well, he would be if he wasn't trying to smash every bone in your body**



Anyone who's ever played and lost at all those old favourites like Space Invaders **and** Galaxians **ought to have a look at this. The graphics aren't that hot but the gameplay is gripping enough to keep you glued to the monitor for . . . er . . . well, quite a long time. It wouldn't be *that* long a time though – I mean, playing fancy** Space Invaders **is fun for a bit but it's not exactly the most complex thing in the world. At a budget price this would be a must. At full-price, try afore ye buy.**

PRESENTATION 65%
Password system plus various difficulty levels.

GRAPHICS 41%
Basic alien sprites with very primitive detail.

SOUND 55%
Jingly tune which can be switched off in favour of some fairly uninteresting sound effects.

HOOKABILITY 68%
It doesn't look all that hot but it is dead easy to get into.

LASTABILITY 59%
Good for an afternoon of frantic play but probably not much more than that.

OVERALL 66%
A good down to earth blast which would have been fab as a budget game.



rstore

REALLY CHEAP GAMES

ADVENTURES

BARD'S TALE 3 – THIEF OF FATE disk, Electronic Arts
OFFER 15.99, RRP 19.99, (81%), Z130D

CORRUPTION Amiga disk, Rainbird
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INGRID'S BACK disk, Level 9
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LEGEND OF THE SWORD disk, Rainbird
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MINDFIGHTER cass, Abstract Concepts
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MINDFIGHTER disk, Abstract Concepts
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MORDON'S QUEST cass, Melbourne House
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STRATEGY

DECISIVE BATTLES OF THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR disk, Electronic Arts
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POOL OF RADIANCE disk, SSI
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QUESTRON II disk, SSI
OFFER 15.99, RRP 19.99, (81%), Z102D

WARGAME CONSTRUCTION KIT disk, SSI
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WASTELAND disk, Electronic Arts
OFFER 15.99, RRP 19.99, (95%), Z115D

BUDGET

ACE OF ACES cass, Kixx
RRP 2.99, (85%), Z226C

BUBBLE BOBBLE cass, Silverbird
RRP 1.99, (98%), Z227C

CAULDRON cass, Silverbird
RRP 1.99, (81%), Z272C

CAULDRON II cass, Silverbird
RRP 1.99, (72%), Z273C

BUDGET

PRO SKATEBOARD SIMULATOR cass, Code Masters
RRP 1.99, (79%), Z284C

PRO SKI SIMULATOR cass, Code Masters
RRP 1.99, (69%), Z285C

PSI-DROID cass, Zeppelin
RRP 2.99, (60%), Z286C

PULSE WARRIOR cass, Mastertronic
RRP 1.99, (74%), Z287C

SANXION cass, Rack-it
RRP 1.99, (88%), Z118C

SHOCKWAY RIDER cass, Rack-it
RRP 2.99, (75%), Z289C

SLAYER cass, Rack-it
RRP 2.99, (90%), Z290C

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(Bizarre, isn't it viewers?)



FOR SALE

Commodore 128, 1701 colour monitor, 1541 disk drive. Burst Nibbler, Freeze Machine, 130 plus disks, 100 capacity disk box, mouse, books, 60 magazines. Worth over £1100. Sell for £400 ono. Phone John on 0777 703147 after 4pm.

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C64 original games for sale, Gold Silver Bronze, Salamander, Barbarian II, Emlyn's Int. Soccer, Great Giana Sisters, Ace, Scorpies, Zybex and more. Send SAE to A. Smith, 7 Bangor Walk, St. Ann's, Nottingham. NG3 4FS

C64 games for sale, Game, Set and Match 2 £7, Graphic Adventure Creator (cost £23) only £9, Eureka £2, Scott Adam Scoops (4 adventures) £3, Firelord £2. All original tapes. Phone Nadeem on Bradford (0274) 572807

Commodore 64 with recorder, 1541 drive, 3 cartridges, joystick, over 150 games, 50 discs, disc box, covers, books, excellent condition. Value over £1200 sell for £300. Phone Charles after 4pm 061 998 2726

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CBM 1541C disk drive with manual and leads in fab condition £90. Send cheques ot enquiries to Arwyn Carmody, 36 Hall Gardens, Colney Heath, St Albans, Herts AL4 0QG, England. Offer applies to UK residents only

Commodore 64, still boxed, cassette recorder, 2 joysticks, £150 worth of top games including Barbarian I,II, Hawkeye, Cybernoid, IK Plus, 5 months old, recent ZZAPs, user manual etc £150. Laurence 397 0848 Chessington, Surrey

Commodore 64, datasette, joystick, over £60 worth of software, citizen 120D printer can be used with commodore or BBC, all worth £450, sell for £300. Phone Murji before 7pm on 01 961 5403, 63 Fortunegate Road, Harlesden London NW10 9RH

C64 for sale at bargain price includes datasette, 4 joysticks, MK II, £200 worth of softrware and loads of mags. All for only £130. Phone Buckley (0244) 545885 ask for Barney after 5.00pm, 7.00pm on Thursdays

CBM 64, MPS803 printer, disk drive, 2 joysticks, 2 data recorders, 125 games inc. Double Dragon, Voice Master, Music Maker etc.. Quick sale leaving the country. Phone Adil 01 561 1937 only £250. Also sold separately

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Sega System for sale with four games including World Soccer and Thunderblade. Bargain at just £65 o.n.o. Phone Eastleigh (0703) 616082 and ask for Stuart.

C64 cassette games all originals, Renegade, Leaderboard, Fist II, Baseball, Trivial Pursuit, They Sold a Million, Game, Set and Match, Arterix. Send S.A.E. to Lee Kilgallon, 11E Moirhouse Place, West Edinburgh, EH4 4PQ

Commodore 64C, 1541 disk drive, MPS801 printer and paper, three joysticks, hundreds of games on tape and disk, books, mags, Action Replay MKIV. Excellent condition £350. Phone Rick, Dartfield (0322) 27041 after 6pm

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CBM 128 computer pack, over £750 of original software, 50 mags expert cartridge, 5 joysticks, modem, Action Replay MK3, CBM 4 pack, Sell for £280. Write to Sulaimond Olayinka, 35 Malpas Road, Hackney, London. E8 1NA. Phone Sulaimon on (01) 986 6802 for more information

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CBM 64, two datasettes.Action Replay Mk4, Mouse, Cheese, Backup Board, Speedking joystick, Sound expander, five octave keyboard, £200 of software, mags, books, computer still boxed. All £300. Ring Wallasey 630 2311 after 6.00pm ask for Rob

CBM64, tape deck, 1541 disc drive, manuals, Basic games, dust cover, power pack £200. Phone 0905 621046

Three joysticks, two data cassette, music makers, two power supply, two C64, one working, one for spares, Expert Cartridge with reset button etc, over 60 games £250. Tel: (Downland) 53544 ask for Jamie Haynes

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C64/128 Users! Want to know how experts work out pokes etc and win cash & software prizes in magazines? Then send SAE £1 to: Jason Haymer, 98 Histon Road, Cottenham, Cambridge, CB5 4UD

C64, tape deck, disk drive, loads of disks, Action Replay 3, Music Maker, magazines, plus £200 of games. Worth £500, sell for £250. Tel: (0582) 882974

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C64, 1701 colour monitor, 1541 disk drive, datasette, easy script, dust cover, joystick and over £300 of games including Armalyte, Barbarian 2 and Vindicator. Everything in good condition, bargain at £300. Phone: 0483 273683. Hurry

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SWAPLINE

We want to swap new games (Belgium only). Send lists to: The Trott, Platte-Lostraat 543, 3200 Leuver, Belgium

Amiga contacts wanted now!! To swap only the latest games, demos etc. Write to: Karl, P.O. Box 219, Belconnen, A.C.T. 2616 Australia. No time for lamers, PRESS left mouse button later!

Disk user wants to swap games from all over the globe. Send your lists and letters to John Cartwright, 5 Addy Crescent, South Elmsall, Pontefract, WF9 2XF. Ring South Elmsall 40750. 100% reply

Attention to everybody with a disk drive out there! I want to swap the latest and greatest software with you!! so send some words to Terje Hevroy, Lyngbo Lien 16, 5031 Laksevaag, Bergen, Norway. DO IT. . . .

Hot and Fast Amiga contacts wanted. Send lists or disks to: Eugene Butler, 8 Somerby Road, Morecambe, Westgate, Lancs, LA4 4SQ England. 100% reply. Send disks if possible

Disk or tape users, old or new games, contact Colin, 22 Birkhall Road, Thorntree, Middlesborough, Cleveland, TS3 9JP England. Send list of games. All letters answered 100%

Computer 64 Swop Shop. Bored with your games, why not join our SWOP SHOP. All members receive our quarterly magazine. SAE for membership, send to: 64 Swop Shop, 3 Old Church Street, Aylestone, Leicester

C64 user wants to swap new stuff. I have list of latest games. Send list or disks to: Reijo Pentinmaki, 61270 Wopasarvi, Finland. I promise to reply to all letters

C-64 disk user wants to swap latest games, demos, utilities. Send list or disks to C. O'Carroll, Kilsheelin, Mt. Venus Road, Rathfarnham, Dublin 16, Ireland. All letters answered and disks returned

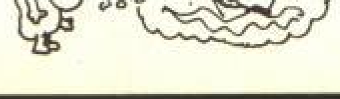
Amiga enthusiast wishes to swap software worldwide, everyone welcome, 100% reply guaranteed. Extensive collection owned. Send listings or disk to:Darren Wood, 18 Rimutaka Place, Titrangi, Auckland 7, New Zealand



PEN PALS

CBM 64 games for sale from £1 to £5. Also wanted CBM Amiga penpals for swapping etc. For more info write to: David Milbourne, 197 Clargate Lane, Ipswitch, Suffolk, Ip3 0RF

CBM 64 disk owner, 14 with excellent collection of games would like to swap software with anyone worldwide. Send your list to Paul Ty, 11 Maes Deri, Winchwen, Swansea, United Kingdom. SA1 7LW



C64 owner would like Pen Pals from around the world. To swap demos and games. Please include list. Please write to Andrew Jackson, 8 Caithness Court, Runcorn, Cheshire, England. All letters answered. Please write fast!



USER GROUPS

YO! Mark Thompson is looking for contacts on C64 disk. Interested? then send a list to 20 Woodhall Road, Old Swan, Liverpool, L13 3EH. What are you waiting for? Start writing!

Karine of the CTC Inc. wants new contacts, especially from Scandinavia and the US. We're also looking for a grafix-wizard. Contact: J.V. Eyckdreef 10, B-8900 Ieper, Belgium. Only AMIGA!. Boring lamers will be ignored

Disk users Jassam Sayedi, 1902 Road 216, Bahrain wants to swap the newest stuff on disk from all over world. Send disk or list. All letters answered

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MISCELLANEOUS

Poker for the C64, programmed in machine code, an excellent version £2.50 on cassette, £3 on disk. Send money to Paul Montwill, 75 Kill Abbey, Blackrock, Co. Dublin, Eire. Tel:(Dublin) 894763



RESULTS with Ken the Fish

Well, my petite purveyors of piscatory pleasure, a month has passed by since we last exchanged fishy fluids. When you reach Megastar status like me, your life is packed with functions like tv appearances, opening supermarkets and visiting European Royalty – one barely has time to work for poor old ZZAP!, but one does one's best. Anyway, there's a couple of results this month: that amusing fish-tickler, Bazza McGuazza, offered tickets to his next fight (Fish hate violence), and then there was that rather tasty Gold Label Crusty Special VCR. So let's get down and get jivin' for another rockin' boppin' bowl full of plankton-sniffing fun.

IT'S A FAIR COMP

Waaay back in the days when we crawled off to land and spawned you lot, we never used to fight amongst ourselves – it shows that evolution doesn't always mean better species. Superior Software cashed in on this aggressive tendency and offered a couple of tickets to Bazza McGuigga's next underwater fight, Mike Tyson's boxing video and a signed copy of *By Fair Means or Foul*. Who won this fish-kettle of laughs? Well, let me put it this way:

W. K. Wan, Stoke-on-Trent ST4 3DS.

Four aquatic runners up received a Mike Tyson video and a signed copy of the game. Tough luck, guys and gals – maybe you'll send me some A1 quality fish food as a bribe next time:

Julie Bryant, Horsham RH12 4RN; Ian Doason, Hartlepool TS26 8JY; Leon Gregory, Nottingham NG17 7AB; Keith Cormack, Aberdeen AB1 7LX.

SUMMER LARKABOUT FUN COMPETITION

I've got some 18-rated videos of naked fish at home – if you want to pop round to my bowl sometime, we can spend an evening drinking plankton extract (with plenty of C_2H_5OH, if you know what I mean), smokin' pondweed tabs and munching on some small crustaceans. Anyway, those prolific spawners at Epyx offered a brilliant (but sadly, not waterproof) VCR, some Olympic videos and a copy of *The Games – Summer Edition*. Who'll be watching Ben Jonson's un-fishlike behaviour again?

Dave Stewart, Corsham SN13 9JD.

Meanwhile, back in the pond, 19 runners up received a copy of the game, not signed by me, Ken D Fish:

Andrew Potts, Kingswinford DY6 8NY; R Major, Walton-on-Thames; Anthony Buckle, Brighton BN2 5ES; E Abbate, Zeist Netherlands; John Morris, Shipley BD18 4QY; Lee Jones, Sandiocre NG10 5EF; Neil Bache, Stourbridge DY8 3YN; Craig Watts, Rotherham S65 2NF; Paul Matthews, Dunstable LU6 3BA; Sam Trafford, Scarborough YO13 9HU; Dennis Richardson, London SE15 4NP; Suketu Patel, Southend-on-Sea SS1 2DE;ajeeb Rashid, London SW15 1RW; Jason M Vince, London N14 4NY; Pat Bowe, Douglas Cork; Lee Fletcher, Chesterfield S44 5JA; Peter Wognum, Billericay CM11 2QA; Sangdil Patel, Southend-on-Sea SS2 6JH; Neehal Shah, Barnet EN4 0HP.

CHART WINNERS

All you keen-eyed fish out there (and that doesn't include *any* species of flatfish – they're stupid) will notice that there are *no* charts this month. That crab-like editor mentioned something about fitting 50+ reviews in, but I'm having no truck with that. However, we've decided to give you lot a £40 software voucher and a T-shirt for entering anyway – and the charts *will* be back next month, in a different disguise. Who won? Well, **J Temple's fish who lives in Colchester did.** And the runners up who got T-shirts and caps?

Ravindra Gupta's guppy, Romford RM1 2TB; David Exton's eel, Stafford ST16 2SG; Colin Pitt's pilchard, Northolt UB5 6HP; and Lee Milner's mullet, Hull HU5 4NA.

So, another month goes by. Of course, I received millions of Valentine's cards, but unfortunately, our respective genitalia are incompatible, so I have to disappoint most of you. Derek, John, Tracey and Allan are all welcome, however. Anyway – if you have queries about How To Look After Your Pet Fish, want to know anything about Fish Psychology or would like an answer to your ZZAP! Comp Problem, write to or ring me, Ken D Fish, c/o Viv Vickress, ZZAP!, PO Box 10, LUDLOW, Shropshire, SY8 1DB. Until Issue 48, my little ling-lovers, gloop gloop!

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THE ZZAPTIONNAIRE

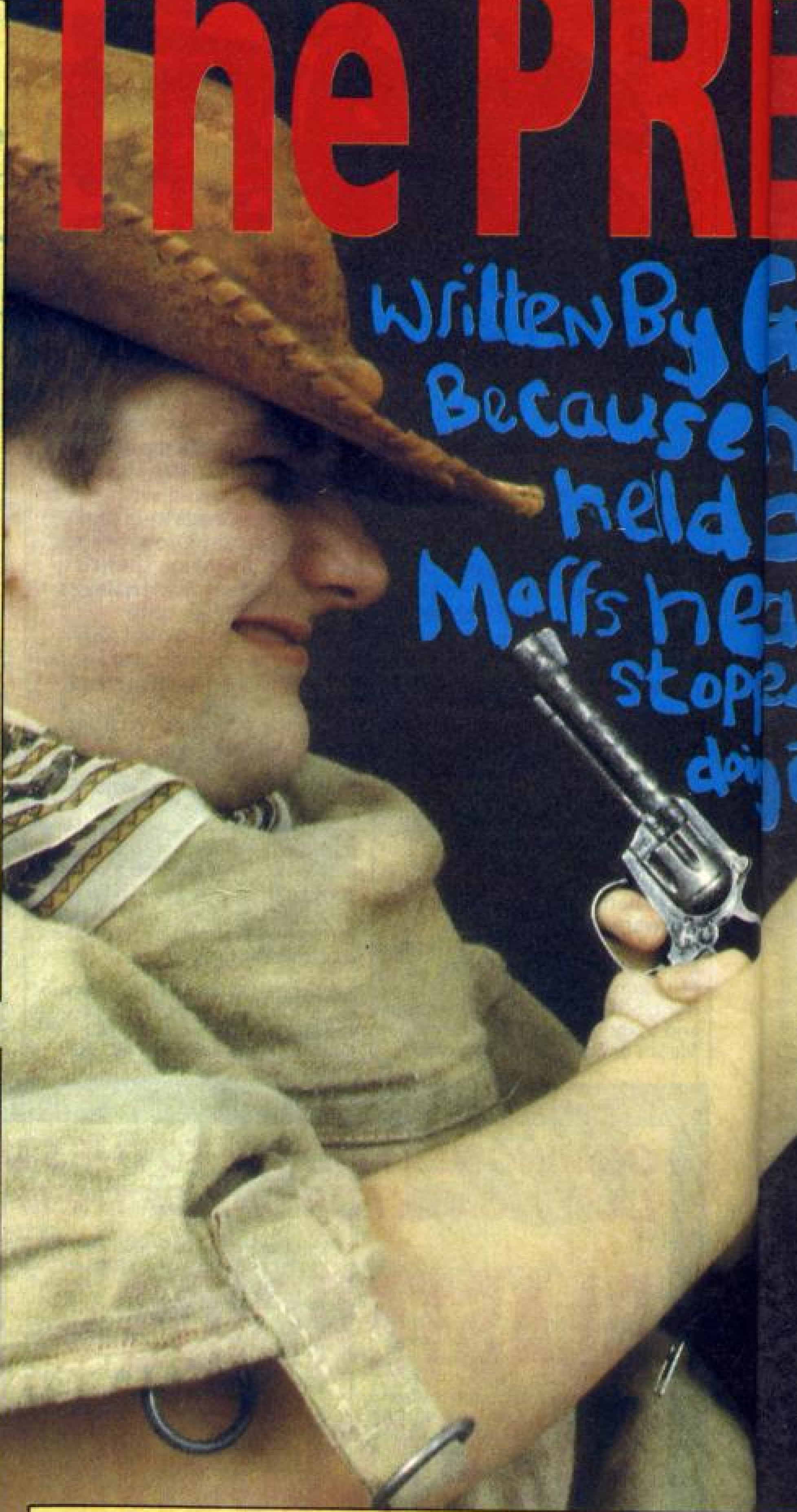
Are you really p*ed off with any aspect of ZZAP!? Well, this is the time to air your views and change the magazine for yourself. You don't like the fat git as Editor? You don't like that Flint psycho or that mad woman? Then get scribbling on next month's form!**

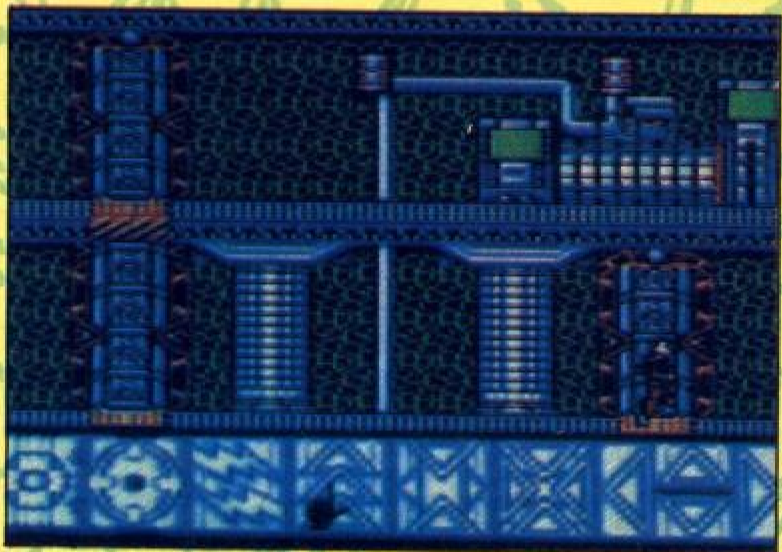
THE CHALLENGE

Gordo takes on the whole world at either EMLYN HUGHES INTERNATIONAL SOCCER or SPEEDBALL. Which will it be? Will the fat man gird his flabby loins into porky action? Wil he suffocate his twiglet competitor in a mountain of flab? Will we ever see the challenger again? Will we ever stop asking questions?

AND WHAT'S IT ALL GONNA COST? ONLY £1.25 FOR THE BEST SELLING COMMODORE MAGAZINE AROUND, THAT'S WHAT. BE THERE ON MARCH 16 WITH YOUR DOSH OR THEY WON'T SELL IT TO YOU . . . ER . . . THAT'S IT. YOU CAN TURN OVER AND READ THE PREVIEWS NOW. BYE.

The PR





OBLITERATOR (Virgin Mastertronic)

Remember this on the Amiga? Well, it's about to shed its load onto your 64 next. Are you sitting comfortably? Then I'll begin. Once upon a time . . .

. . . there was a race of warriors called the Obliterators, trained from birth to be dead 'ard (three Shredded Wheat, pulling two nasal hairs out at once – that kind of thing). Each one was given a genetically enhanced body to speed up reflexes, enhance the senses and increase strength and agility. Fortunately, you're one of them.

So what do you have to do, then? Well, there's this huge Alien Spaceship that destroyed an entire Federation Star Fleet and is now about to make people lasagne with the Earth. Your orders are: enter and cripple that ship and do lots of damage. The price is: £9.99 cass, £14.99 disk. The release date is: mid-February. Let's hope they improved that scrolling . . .



POPULOUS (Electronic Arts)

Ever fancied playing God or the Devil? Ever fancied wiping out 'uuuge tracks o' land in one fell swoop?
Ever fancied watching little men in brown underpants wander around teensy-weensy autonomous settlements, establishing whole societies before your very eyes?

Well, you'll just have to wait a bit, until the latest production from Bullfrog *(Fusion)* hits the streets in March. We've seen an early version of it, and it looks absolutely *amazing* . . .

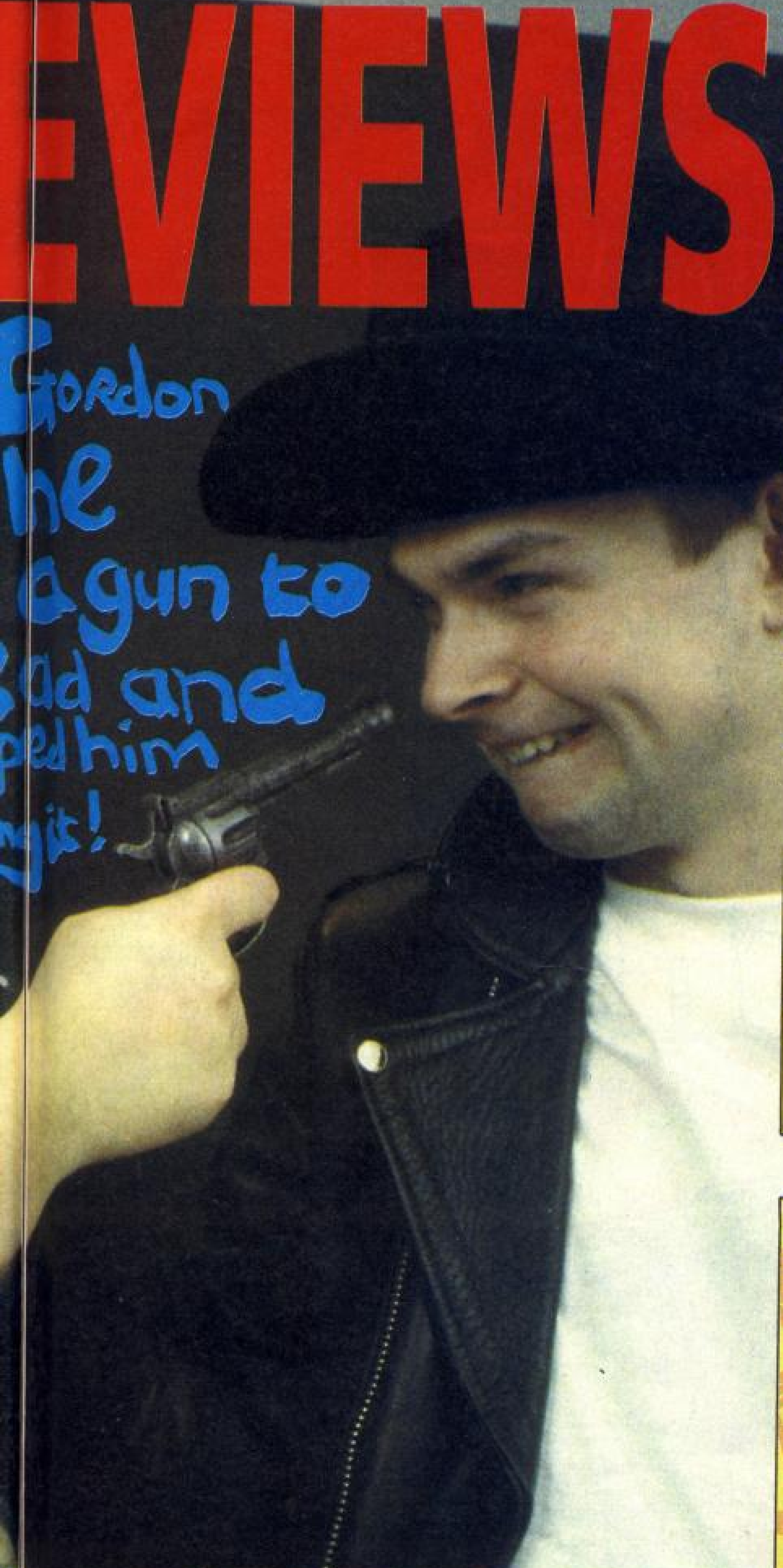
You start off playing either Mr Nice or Mr Nasty and your aim is to populate new lands, evolve new technologies and then wipe out your opponent. At your disposal are some mega-divine weapons such as swamps, earthquakes, floods and volcanos – but you've got a lot of evolution before you get to *that* stage. It'll be £24.95 (Amiga), and is well worth looking out for.

DNA WARRIOR (Cascade)

At first glance, you may think this looks a bit *Salamander*-ish, but you'd be wrong, wouldn't you? It is, in fact, a two-way scrolling shoot 'em up from those zany and maaad people at Cascade, who gave you such classics as *Ace* and *Ace 2*.

Any road up, it's got a reaaally odd scenario: you're the pilot of a microsubmersible on its way through the bloodstream, and you're trying to stop the growth of a second brain which a silly scientist-type implanted in himself. Tut tut. Your mission, should you decide to accept it, won't be easy: there's body defence systems, mutant brain tissue (like wot Maff has in his head), bionic limbs, a pace-maker and *much more*. Release date is February 15th, so it should be out NOW at £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk (C64) and £19.95 (Amiga).

EVIEWS



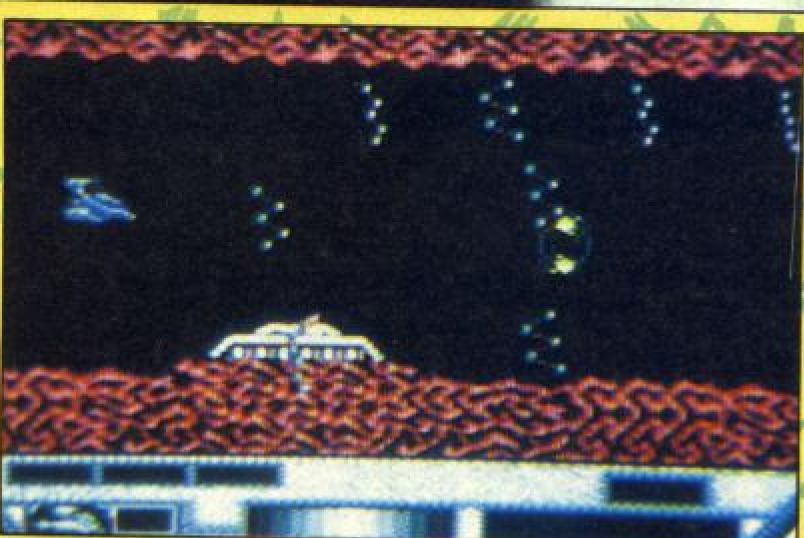


F-16 COMBAT PILOT (Digital Integration)

Even though wot you lot see 'ere is an Amiga screenshot, this game is actually going to be available first on the 64, sometime in early March. Let's get the prices out of the way first: (C64) £14.95 cass, £19.95 disk; (Amiga) £24.95 – all versions include a 100-page manual.

The claims made for it are pretty awesome: unlike any other simulation, it takes you from the crew room to the hangar, through pre-flight briefing and then into the cockpit of the latest, hi-tech F-16 Fighting Falcon; a Quickstart facility allows you to get straight into the action. Inside the cockpit you've got all them gadget thingies: laser targetting, LANTIRN target recognition, AMRAAM missiles and other technospeak which easily excites simulation buffs.

There are 8 squadrons and a multi-mission campaign: as you get more experienced, you transfer to squadrons with a higher status. So far it's looking ace, so watch the skies!

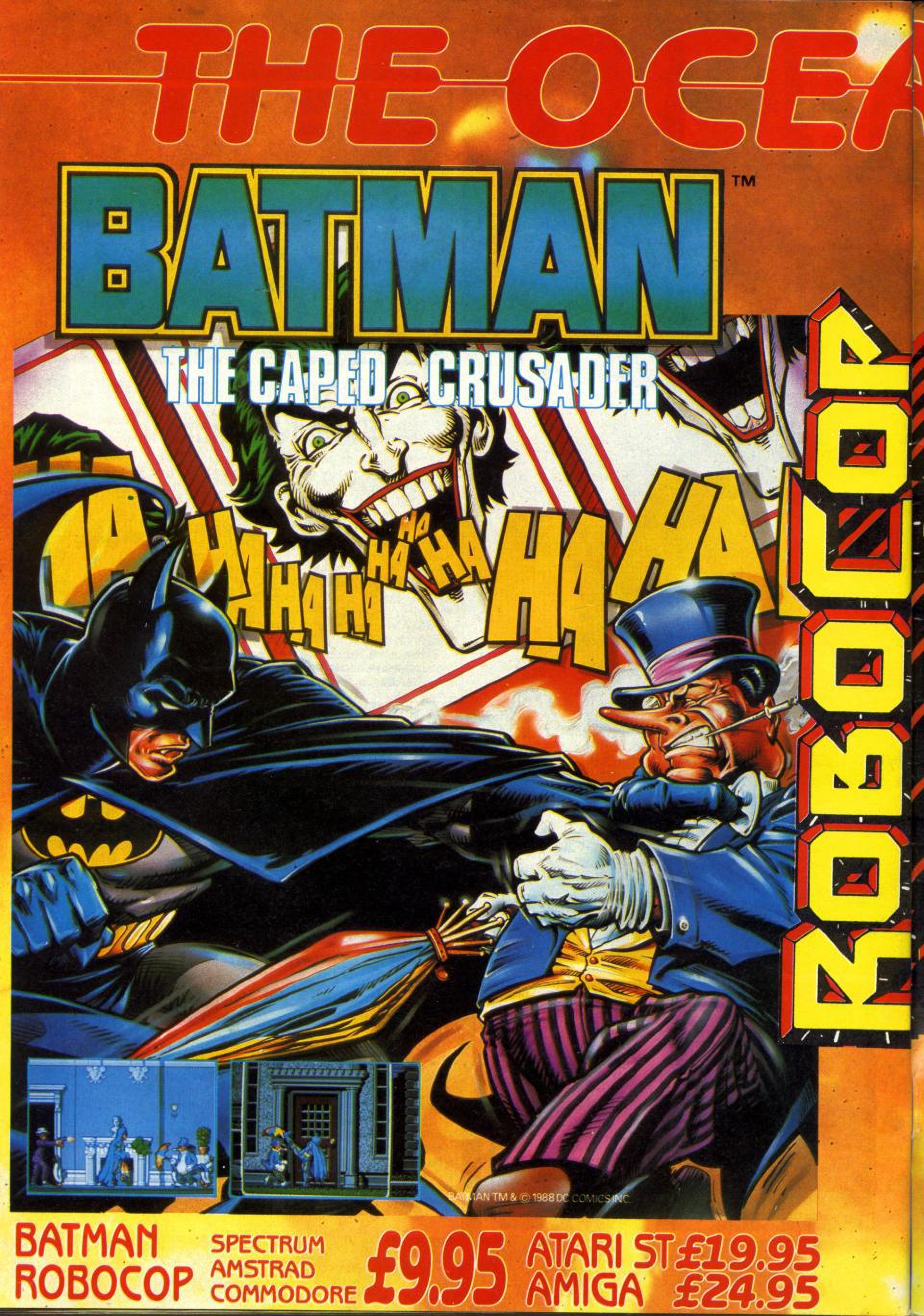




TYGER, TYGER (Firebird)

Fans of Gary Liddon – that premier tea-maker extraordinaire and ex-ZZAP! writer – will warm to his latest game, which be a silly arcade adventure.

As the fearless Sumo-type, Lance Tyger, you negotiate four harrowing levels of bloody battle in a *deceptively calm* mystical land. Armed only with a trusty sword, you've got to face marauding aard varks and monstrous beasties with pointy teeth; kill these and you get coins with which to buy better weapons. Featuring multi-directional scrolling (grafix by Paul Docherty), it should be available about now: (C64) £9.99 cass, £12.99 disk.


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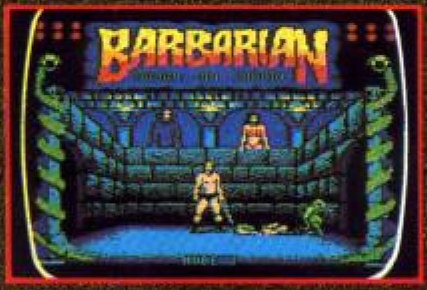

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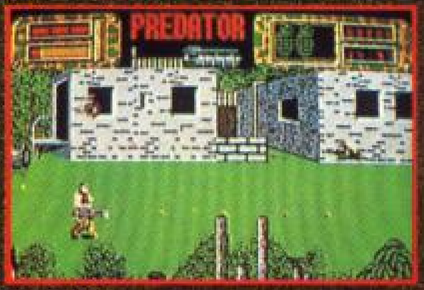
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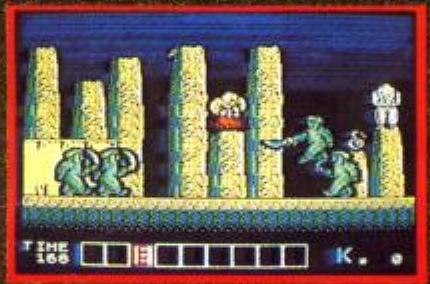
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